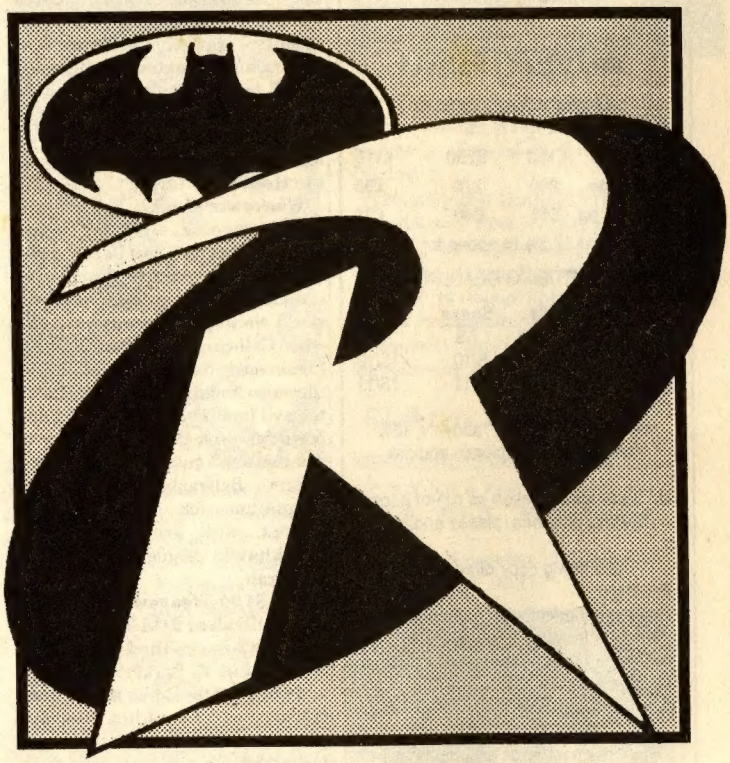
comics INTERNATIONAL

£ ·30

№13 SEPTEMBER 1991

76 PAGE ISSUE STILL ONLY 30p

DC leads with hologram art



UTILISING new technology to its fullest extent, DC Comics has announced that it will be publishing its second Boy Wonder mini-series, **Robin: Joker's Wild** with ten different hologram covers.

Previously, DC had been seen to adopt a low-key approach to marketing. Possibly prompted by recent poor sales in comparison to market leader Marvel, the company has developed a similar strategy of multi-cover packaging.

Ironically, DC created the alternative covers trend with **Legends of the Dark Knight 1** and the **Man of Steel** mini-series, but sales on these books were hardly record-breaking.

Now DC has taken the initiative again by being the first company to utilise holograms on comicbook covers. The difference this time is that the full marketing and exploitation potential are being realised.

Like last month's **X-Men 1**, all versions of **Robin: Joker's Wild 1** will have identical interiors but will be wrapped in five different covers: the regular ($1) newsstand format and four specialist market ($1.50) variants featuring hologram cover effects over Dick Giordano artwork.

On a fortnightly schedule, the 4-issue mini-series will continue with regular $1 newsstand editions, but the direct sale second issue will feature three hologram versions, the third issue two hologram versions and the fourth only one.

This totals 14 variants with a combined retail value of $19.

In addition, DC is currently soliciting retailers for a collector's set of all five first issue variants together with a separate hologram duplicating the cover art. Though the individual versions of issue 1 would sell for a total of $7, the collector's set is $10.

The publisher is also asking traders to place orders this month for the December shipping "deluxe complete set" consisting of all 14 variants, two acid-free backing boards (with a new hologram) and a "deluxe" slipcase. The complete set has a retail value of $19, but the "deluxe" version, limited by DC to 25,000, will retail at $30 dollars. This means collectors pay an additional $11 for the slipcase and backing boards (with hologram).

The difference between each issue's variants will be in the positioning of the hologram effect. While only one piece of art will be produced for each issue's cover, different sections will receive the 3-dimensional treatment.

The plot of **Robin: Joker's Wild** tells of the new, inexperienced Robin standing alone against The Joker's attempts to totally destroy Gotham City while Batman is unreachable overseas.

Under editor Denny O'Neil, the creative team of the 1990 **Robin** mini-series is reunited with Chuck Dixon writing, Tom Lyle producing pencil art and Bob Smith inking.

Cover Attractors

While the tradition of experimentation on comic covers dates back to the early Dell use of photographs in the 1940s, it was not until the last few years that market leader Marvel made a collector's item out of experimental covers.

The first brief use of an extra colour, beyond the regular four-colour press limits of red, yellow, blue and black was with day-glo inks, pioneered by horror comics publisher Jim Warren in the 1970s. But others failed to take up the challenge until Marvel recognised the need to make its titles stand out in a sea of over 400 competitive comics a month.

Metallic inks, silver and gold, were used for anniversary and special issues, and luminous inks were added to a recent Marvel **Ghost Rider**. The fan reaction to the 'novelty' covers led to soaring sales, with experimentation culminating in **Silver Surfer 50**, which combined silver inks, card covers and an embossed (raised) image of the hero.

Reflecting other '90s consumer industries where product technology appears to have superseded the importance of content, DC now introduces holograms as a new factor in the comics dollar race.

Inside this issue

Prince: Alter Ego

***Set to coincide with the release of his new album, Prince in a fantasy adventure, behind a* Diamonds & Pearls cover** .. 3

Two-Fisted Tales

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CIRCULATION: 11,500

COMICS INTERNATIONAL

PO BOX 1937
LONDON N3 2LP

Telephone: 081 343 0400
Fax: 081 349 2026

Published monthly as an independent trade paper for the comics industry. Edited and designed by Derek G. Skinn. Associate editor: Sarah Bolesworth. Computer system consultants: Broadbay Limited & Chris Wright.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

UK & Ireland: £7.50 for 12 issues.
USA & Canada: Because of varying issues weights substantially affecting postage charges it is regretted that overseas subscriptions are no longer available

Please make all payments payable to:
Comics International

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No. 15	Nov 1991	8/10	15/10
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NEWS america

Marvel launch two new Barker titles

In their fourth major marketing push of 1992, Marvel follows Wild Ones, Infinity Gauntlet and Mutant Genesis campaigns with the expanded horror line under the umbrella of *Harvest of Evil*.

Timed to capitalize on the increase in horror and supernatural product generally associated with the Halloween season, **Clive Barker's Hellraiser** and the recently launched **Tomb of Dracula** and **Legion of Night** are joined by two more Barker titles, **Weaveworld** and **Jihad**, and the oneshot **Hellraiser Poster Book** featuring a collection of images from the **Hellraiser** title.

Weaveworld will be a three-issue series shipping every six weeks which adapts the Clive Barker novel in which an ordinary floor carpet contains a sub-atomic dormant world waiting to be awakened. But when Calhoun Mooney and Suzanna Lecshenski discover 'Weaveworld' they also find themselves faced with the evil Immaculotta, a beutiful and powerful woman who wants to dominate the miscroscopic planet.

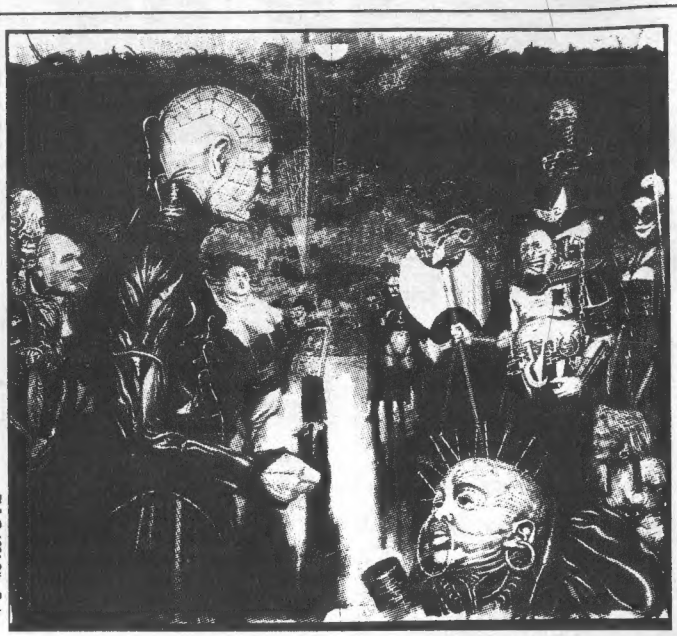
Erik Saltzgaber writes the adaptation for Marvel's Epic imprint, with artwork by Mike **(Darkhawk)** Manley and Ricardo Villagran.

The $4.95 **Weaveworld 1** ships with **Hellraiser 9** ($5.95) October 1.

In the 2-issue **Jihad**, readers are reintroduced to Barker's Cenobites and the Nightbreed as a rebellious faction of Cenobites receive permission from their demonic god Leviathan to lead a cleansing slaughter of the Nightbreed.

Written by Dan **(Daredevil)** Chichester, colour artwork is provided by Paul **(Interface)** Johnson and the $4.50 title ships on October 8.

The Hellraiser Poster Book is an 8.5 x 11" collection of work including contributions by Jay Muth, Kent Williams, Simon Bisley, Mike Mignola, plus comments by Barker and a sixteen page foldout of Pinhead by John Bolton. Shipping October 8, the book is priced $4.95.



™ & © 1991 Clive Barker

Artwork from: ***Jihad 1, Weaveworld 1*** *and* ***Hellraiser 9*** *(cover)*

New readers: begin here

Comics International *is a monthly industry trade newspaper devoted to the comics medium. As such, it provides details of forthcoming UK and US comics and related items.*

Certain products mentioned are not available through regular newsagent shops, but only from the 'direct sale' comics specialist retailers and mail order companies. Details of such are advertised throughout the magazine, and a listing of the major specialist shops is given in our Retail Index.

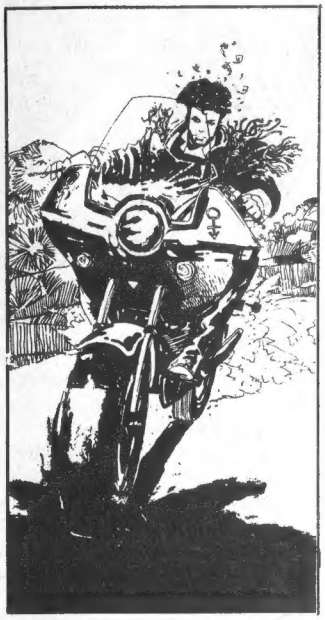
Shipping dates *mentioned for American and Canadian titles are the dates copies leave their North American printers to be air-freighted to the UK for specialist shop sale approximately one week later. These dates, and titles, do not relate to newsagent on sale dates or titles.*

The Marvel and DC titles on general national distribution are on sale approximately two to three months after the air-freighted copies can be bought through specialist shops and mail order companies dealing with 'advance imports'. Because of the additional shipping costs incurred, these copies will possibly be sold at a higher price than the UK price printed on their covers.

American dollar prices *are listed for US publications, with most specialist shops converting at the rate of 65p to the dollar.*

Piranha Press launches Prince: Alter Ego

WITH A wide US media launch encompassing such diverse places as **The Wall Street Journal**, Black Entertainment Television and The Arsenio Hall Show, DC has announced its forthcoming publication of a Pirhana Press title featuring one of contemporary music's most popular personalities, Prince.



Designed to coincide with the release of Prince's new album and the start of his US tour, **Prince: Alter Ego** will feature the composer-performer in a way his fans have never seen him before.

Prince becomes locked in musical mortal combat against a man from his past who possesses the power to turn music into the greatest force for destruction the world has ever seen.

This 32 page $2 fantasy adventure is produced with the approval and participation of Prince, and features a fully painted cover depicting the hologram sleeve to Prince's platignum-shipping new album, "Diamonds and Pearls".

Scripted by Dwayne (**Deathlok**) McDuffy, the title is illustrated by Denys (**The Question**) Cowan and Kent (**Meltdown**) Williams with a shipping date yet to be announced.

Two new Destroyer titles from Marvel

FOLLOWING the popularity of such action heroes as Ghost Rider, Punisher and Deathlok, Marvel is producing two titles featuring **The Destroyer**.

Destroyer: Terror is an all-new 4-issue limited series written by the creator of the **Destroyer** paperbacks Warren Murphy (who aslo scripted the movie **Lethal Weapon II**) aided by Molly Cochran. Priced $1.95, the series begins shipping October 8 with artwork by Mike Harris and Fred Fredericks.

One week earlier, Marvel ships **The Destroyer** trade paperback. A 160 page colour title, it reprints stories from the first three issues of the 1989-1990 magazine by Ditko, Weeks, Manley and Texiera as well as three new stories by Will Murray, Steve Ditko and Don Heck.

The Destroyer trade paperback is priced $9.95.

IN BRIEF

Lee signs X-Men

Obviously not suffering from writer's cramp, Marvel publisher Stan Lee has agreed to personally autograph 11,500 copies of the special **Uncanny X-Men 1** reprint currently on sale.

Californian mail order company *Fantasy Distribution* is offering copies signed (limited to 10,000) for $6 to $10, depending on quantity bought, or signed and numbered (limited to 1,500) for $15 to $25.

All-Out Mayhem

JUSTICE League Europe 33 continues the 15-part "Breadowns" storyline with Guy Gardner vs JLI vs Lobo vs Despero in the heart of New York City. Definitely one for action fans, it ships November 5.

George Perez: 'Rigors of Summer'

DESPITE earlier published boasts about having already finished the artwork on Marvel's **Infinity Gauntlet**, George Perez was reported to have fallen behind schedule recently and has been replaced by Ron Lim from issue 4, in shops now.

Perez is quoted as blaming overcommitment and "the rigors of summer" for being taken off the book by editor Craig Anderson.

Double Doom Patrol

DOOM PATROL 50 will be a double size $2.50 edition with a 30-page Brotherhood of Dada story by Grant Morrison, Richard Case and guest artists Jamie (**Tank Girl**) Hewlett and Rian (**Revolver**) Hughes. As well as the three chapter lead story, the issue features a Brit-pack portfolio with contributions from Brian Bolland, Shaky Kane, Simon Bisley, Rian Hughes, Jamie Hewlett and others.

Doom Patrol 50 will be a 48 page issue shipping November 5.

Deathlok v Punisher

IT WAS inevitible. Deathlok meets The Punisher in a story by the regular team of Wright, Cowan and Manley in **Deathlok 6**, shipping October 22.

The story has Deathlok trying to save his son from a drug-pushing ring run by Silvermane, but the appearance of the Punisher causes Deathlok to change his plans.

This historic first meeting (and subsequent battle) continues into the following issue.

Elektra lives again

KENT WILLIAMS provides the artwork for a new Daredevil and Elektra poster shipping from Marvel.

Shipping November 12, it is priced $5.95 (plus UK VAT).

Return of WittyWorld

FOLLOWING a break of several months, **WittyWorld** returns with a full colour double-size issue, numbered 11/12.

Within its 100 pages, as well as regular columns, reviews and articles by cartoonists from three continents, is Bhob Stewart's recounting of 75 years of King Feature Syndicate and ten pages of self-caricatures by such artists as Milton Caniff, Joe Kubert, Will Eisner, Bill Griffith and Robert Crumb.

Shipping September, **WittyWorld 11/12** carries a $13.60 cover price.

Dark Horse Deadline

What I mean is, I wish someone would license us as beloved cartoon properties.
Lately I've be
Milk old boy, it
will never be
as 'G
Um.

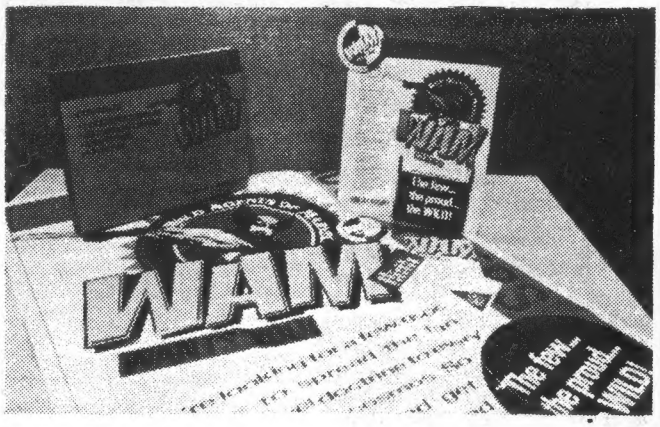
DEADLINE USA begins its bimonthly run on September 24 as a 96 page black and white ads-free title from Dark Horse.

Combining reprints from the cult British title with new material from "America's steaming comix underbelly" (as publishers Dark Horse term it), new creations include: Ho (**I Want to be Your Dog**) Anderson's "Doe" and Richard (**Buzz, Blab**) Sala's "13 O'Clock".

Reprints include work by Jamie Hewlett (Tank Girl), Pete Milligan and Brett Ewins (Johnny Nemo), Shaky Kane (A-Men), plus Julie Hollings, Rick Moran, D'Israeli and Rachel Ball.

Jamie Hewlett provides cover art and the book is priced $9.95.

Trade concern over new Marvel fan club



THE NEW Marvel fan club currently under development WAM (Wild Agents of Marvel) has created concern among direct sale distributors.

Marvel had stated its intention to offer product direct to consumers, and to make new items specifically for WAM members which would not be available elsewhere. Feeling they were being bypassed, Capital City Distributors spoke to Marvel Vice President of New Product Carol Kalish at the recent San Diego Comic Convention, expressing concern.

Kalish later responded that a number of steps were being taken to tie WAM activities to direct sales retailers, rather than by-passing them.

All WAM merchandise, including WAM logo-products such as t-shirts and Book Club-style limited editions created specifically for WAM members would now be sold through specialist distributors and retailers.

One aspect of the club will now actively attract members to local comic shops through coupon mail outs which members can redeem over the counter.

It has also been stated that any direct-to-member promotions Marvel offers will encourage buyers to visit shops first and any mail order offer will only be used as back-up for areas without comics shops.

The intention appears to be to encode the consumers, based on whether they enroled through retailers or direct mail, so that those using shops would not be directly solicited for subscriptions.

It is also intended that existing retail outlets will be used for distributing free offers to members; as centres for WAM headquarter events, and access points for special products that can only be purchased at WAM stores.

The new WAM kit (pictured above) has been designed to make the retailer a recruitment arm of the fan club through a promotional poster, badges for shop staff and a take-one counter card. At least one American distributor will be issuing these kits to any retailer ordering Marvel comics, based on Marvel's assurances that the data gathered through this method will be used to enhance the existing distribution channels rather than by-pass them.

No indication has been made about whether UK retailers and distributors will be affected or included in these recent events.

Milton Griepp of Capital City Distribution summed up the situation by saying that Marvel must take care "to avoid crossing the line between enhancing the comic market and despoiling it".

Comics International would like to thank Capital City Distribution for its assistance with this article, and for its work in helping maintaining the comics retailers' position in the market.

Marvel launches 8 Spanish editions

HOLLYWOOD'S favourite Spanish expression, "Que pasa?" will be heard throughout America this October as Marvel begins to publish its simultaneous Spanish language editions of eight titles.

While the low cost run-ons with only a language plate change, makes sound financial sense, better investigation of editorial content would have led to less confusing introductary issues.

Captain America begins in Spanish with issue 395, containing the second part of the "Heart of the Viper" storyline, while **Amazing Spider-Man** begins with part four of "Round Robin" and **Spider-Man** ties in with the Infinity Gauntlet series.

The other Marvel titles to be simultaneously printed in English and Spanish are **Uncanny X-Men, X-Men, X-Force, Ghost Rider,** and **Deathlok**.

It is to be hoped that special introductory boxes are being created, particularly in the case of the X-books' complex storylines.

Tor goes Monster

EVERYONE's favourite Swedish wrestling sensation / cult movie icon becomes the subject of a factional biography in the forthcoming **Tor Johnson - Hollywood Star**, released by Fantagraphics' Monster Comics imprint.

John Wooley and Bruce McCorkindale alternate between truth and fiction in this title which has odd-numbered pages depicting facts from Johnson's life and even-numbered pages being more 'inspired'.

An affectionately produced tribute to a truly unique individual, **Tor Johnson - Hollywood Star 1** is a $2.50 32 page black and white title shipping in October.

Harvey Kurtzman revives Two-Fisted Tales for '92

HARVEY KURTZMAN, one of America's most innovative comics creators, returns to the industry in early 1992 with one of his most famous creations, **Two-Fisted Tales**.

His best-known creation, **MAD**, totally changed format and style under the orders of publisher William M Gaines, from a standard comicbook into a black and white magazine, in a successful attempt to avoid the comics 'witch hunt' of the 1950s, and it was this move which led to Kurtzman's departure from Gaines' EC Publications.

But while working for Gaines, Kurtzman created what are considered by many to be the zenith of war comics, **Two-Fisted Tales** and **Frontline Combat**.

Since leaving **MAD** in 1955, Kurtzman has been best known his **Playboy** strip "Little Annie Fanny" and for launching and editing **Help!**, a 1960s satirical magazine which introduced photo-strips and the work of such notables as Robert Crumb, Terry Gilliam and John Cleese.

Recently, as well as contributing to comics workshops, Kurtzman produced the Epic title, **Harvey Kurtzman's Strange Adventures** with a team of popular contemporary artists and, for Byron

Preiss Visual Publications, **Harvey Kurtzman's From AARGH to ZAP! A Visual History of Comics** which is being published in America by Prentice Hall Press later this year.

Kurtzman's reuniting with the comics production world has led to negotiations by Byron Preiss with William Gaines for the rights to the title **The New Two-Fisted Tales** for Kutzman to edit as a comic with both new material (80%) and EC reprints.

Scheduled to be published twice a year, with the licenced cover use of the old EC circular logo alongside the new publisher's name, **The New Two-Fisted Tales** will focus on the American Civil War, with artists Dave Gibbons and Wayne Vansant having already agreed to contribute.

IN BRIEF

Keep On Trekkin'

THE BEST OF STAR TREK is a 240-page trade paperback reprinting popular stories from DC's eight-year run of the regular comic.

Contributors include: Mike Barr, Peter David, sf author Diane Duane and artists James Fry, Curt Swan and Gordon Purcell.

With a November 5 shipping date, **The Best of Star Trek** carries a $19.95 cover price.

Aquaman refreshed

One of DC's longest lasting characters **Aquaman** is to once again receive his own title in time to celebrate his 50th anniversary this October.

A standard $1.00 continuing title, **Aquaman** is written by newcomer Shaun McLaughlin and drawn by the **Mister Miracle** team of Ken Hooper and Bob Dvorak and tells of the hero's struggle to accept previous failures.

J'onn J'onzz and Blue Beetle guest star in the first issue.

The Black Hood

FOR MONTHS a mysterious presence has lurked in the background of the DC Impact Comics line. Now his identity is revealed, as the Black Hood debuts in his own monthly $1.00 title with the first issue shipping October 15.

The sixth Impact title licenced from Archie Comics, **The Black Hood** is written by **Breathtaker**'s Mark Wheatley and drawn by **Blackhawk**'s Rick Burchett.

Sweepstake Clash

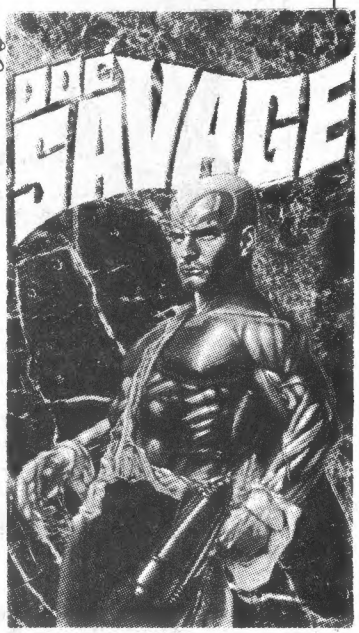
CLASH, the new Tom Veitch and Adam Kubert 3-issue miniseries is set to commence shipping on October 29 with a consumer sweepstakes promotion, "Clash Cash".

With Britain and Albania being the only two European nations

where sweepstakes are banned by law, sales may prove low for DC in these territories, but for areas permitting such, sweepstakes winners will receive the original art from the three issues' covers.

Clash tells of a ruthless and egocentric individual, Joe McLash who stumbles upon a mysterious source of superhuman power and attempts to use it to control the world. Set in the middle Eastern country of 'Panja', the title continues Veitch's exploration of the nature of power, both in a personal sense and from a world perspective.

Clash 1 is a prestige format title with a $4.95 cover price.



DOC SAVAGE: MAN OF BRONZE will be a new 4-part miniseries from Millenium told in the character's original time period of the 1930s.

Behind a Brian Stelfreeze cover (above), the story tells of the diabolical John Sunlight attempting to destroy everything dear to the Man of Bronze, and leads Doc and his "Amazing Five" into conflict with Nazis, gangsters and a 'dirigible of doom'.

The first colour issue is priced $2.50 and ships in October.

KNOCKABOUT T-shirts

KNOCKABOUT COMICS, 10 ACKLAM ROAD, LONDON W10 5QZ
£7.99 each including VAT, postage and packing.
Wholesale enquiries welcome. Phone 081 969 2945

These T-shirts are not your usual run-of-the-mill exploitation item. They are lovingly handcrafted by genuine persons in spiffy three or four-colour designs. These shirts are intended only for the true Fans. Why you may ask? Because it takes so long to get 'em. Sometimes we run out of a size and can't get more for up to 2 months. The printing process takes weeks and months as our skilled craftpersons labour over their fine-meshed screens. It's a long wait but worth it. Our shirts are high quality and the picture and shape will stay until the shirt rots on your body! (if that's your idea of a good time)

FAT FREDDY'S CAT (B) DANCING

FAT FREDDY'S CAT (C) CRAZY

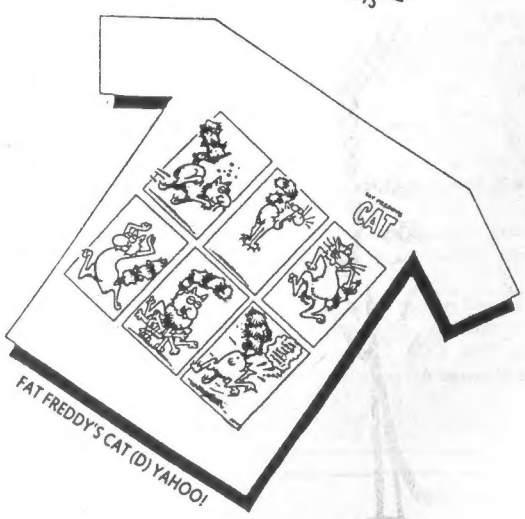
FAT FREDDY'S CAT (A) LOGO

FREAK BROTHERS (A) HEADS

FREAK BROTHERS (D) THE COPS!

FREAK BROTHERS (B) GRASS ROOTS

STONED AGAIN!



FAT FREDDY'S CAT (D) YAHOO!

GET READY FOR A NEW HERO ON THE AC COMICS HORIZON...
HE SEES EVERYWHERE VIA TV LINK UP WITH COMMUNICATION SATELLITES ENCIRCLING THE GLOBE.
CAPTAIN VIDEO!
CAPTAIN VIDEO SENDS FORTH ELECTRONIC 'EYES' TO ALL POINTS OF THE COMPASS.
CAPTAIN VIDEO LINKS UP WITH ALL HIS DEVICES... OBSERVING... GIVING DIRECTIONS... PROGRAMMING WORLD EVENTS.
HE HAS 360° VISION WITH VISOR WHICH IS AN ANTENNA. THE WHOLE SUIT IS THEREBY VISUALLY PATCHING HIM IN...
...WITH WHATEVER HIS SATELLITE VIEWS. HE ALSO CARRIES A REMOTE CONTROL DEVICE THAT IS USED TO TURN THINGS (ALMOST ANYTHING) ON OR OFF. WHEN APPEARING AS A HOLOGRAM, VIDEO'S SUIT IS WHITE.
WHO IS CAPTAIN VIDEO? READ FEMFORCE NO.43 TO FIND OUT!
VICTOR BRIDGES / BILL BLACK '91
CAPTAIN VIDEO ©1991 AC COMICS

THE LATEST super-hero creation from Florida's AC Comics is Captain Video, who debuts in **Fem Force 43**, shipping November, 1991.

Readers are told that through a complex system of video satelitte networking, Captain Video has eyes throughout the world. From his hidden mountain-top headquarters the Captain and his Video Rangers monitor the entire planet ... including the Femforce headquarters.

In true AC tradition, the cover art shows one such surveillance, into the (occupied) Fem Force HQ showers.

With 44 black and white pages, **Fem Force 43** is priced $2.75

UK Dare reprint from US Monster Comics

Dare 1 is a colour 32 page title reprinting the Grant Morrison & Rian Hughes strip from Fleetway's **Revolver** set to ship in October priced $2.75

But while Fleetway has been making ever-increasing publishing moves into the graphic novel market previously seen only under licence to Titan Books, **Dare** is published by Monster Comics, an imprint of Fantagraphic Books.

The four issue series will tell the entire legend-shattering **Revolver** story with background information on Britain's long-running comics hero in issue one.

Rian Hughes provides new cover art for the series.

IN BRIEF

Vintage Thors

12¢ JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY
INTRODUCING... THE MIGHTY THOR!
THE MOST EXCITING SUPER HERO OF ALL TIME!!
BEGIN THE SAGA OF THOR IN THIS ISSUE!

THE SOMETIMES embarrassing early Thor strips are finally being reprinted in the continuing **Marvel Masterworks** series.

Featuring some stories not reprinted for over 20 years, the book contains the Thor adventures from **Journey into Mystery 83 - 100**, plus "Tales of Asgard" from issues 97 and 98.

Marvel Masterworks 18 ships October 15, priced $34.95.

Dredd Revue

COMICS REVUE, the monthly magazine reprinting contemporary adventure strips has added Judge Dredd to its lineup.

Priced $4.95, **Comics Revue 66** also features Modesty Blaise, Flash Gordon (by Gray Morrow), Batman, Phantom, Spider-Man, TMNTurtles and Gasoline Alley.

Limited Ace

A SPECIAL large format signed and numbered limited edition hardback of George Pratt's excellent **Enemy Ace** graphic novel is to be published under licence by Graphitti Editions.

With an additional 16 pages of new text and illustration beyond the previous DC books, the hardcover will be signed by Pratt and limited to a 2000 copy print run.

Shipping October 29, the book carries a $75 price and is a 144 page colour hardback suggested for mature readers.

Cable's solo spot

AS PART of the increased profile for **X-Force** leader Cable, **Marvel Comics Presents #90** features the first episode of an 8-issue team-up between Cable and Ghost Rider.

By Howard Mackie and Guang Yap, the story has Cable searching for additional mutants in the depths of the earth. When his quest leads to a battle beneath a cemetary, Ghost Rider's attention is quickly aroused.

Fellow mutants The Beast and Wolverine also feature in the issue together with Dr Strange's nemesis, Nightmare.

THE NEW comics magazine **Wizard** continues to produce strong advertising and excellent commercial cover art (Ghost Rider on issue 2 and Wolverine on issue 3). But, with the arrival of its premiere issue in the UK last month, the general reaction has been one of disappointment at the poor design, naive editorial and basic content.

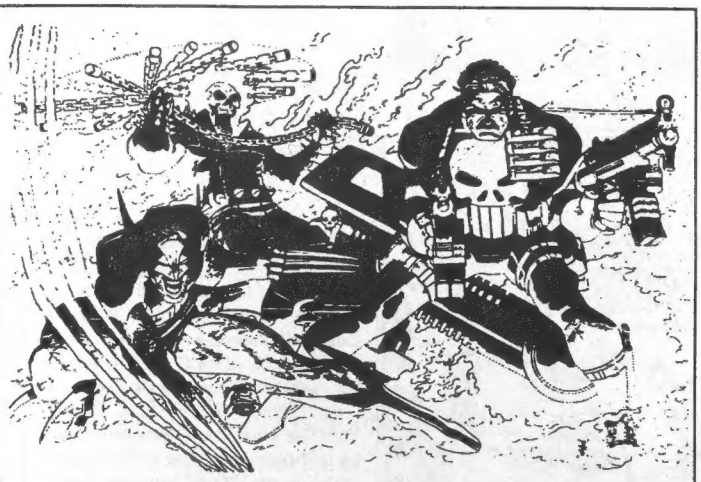
Perhaps British comic fans are more demanding than their US counterparts?

Todd McFarlane's paternity leave

SPIDER-MAN wunderkind Todd McFarlane resigned from the record-breaking title with issue 16 because he "wants to play daddy" to his new baby, born in August.

He had been drawing the Spider-Man character for over four years and is reported to have wanted a new challenge.

Discussions are currently taking place with Epic and Dark Horse over new projects.



WOLVERINE, Punisher and Ghost Rider is a new Marvel poster by John Romita Jr. Shipping November 12 as an early Christmas present for action-orientated comic fans, it is priced $5.95 (plus UK VAT).

DC Team-Up Title Revival

INSTRUMENTAL in launching 'the Silver Age of Comics' and one of DC's most fondly remembered titles, **The Brave & The Bold**, is to be revived.

Originally, it starred Joe Kubert and Robert Kanigher's Viking Prince, backed by equally historic characters Robin Hood, The Silent Knight and The Golden Gladiator.

But with issue 25 (1959), it followed its aptly named companion title **Showcase**, in being a testing-ground for new characters before giving them their own titles.

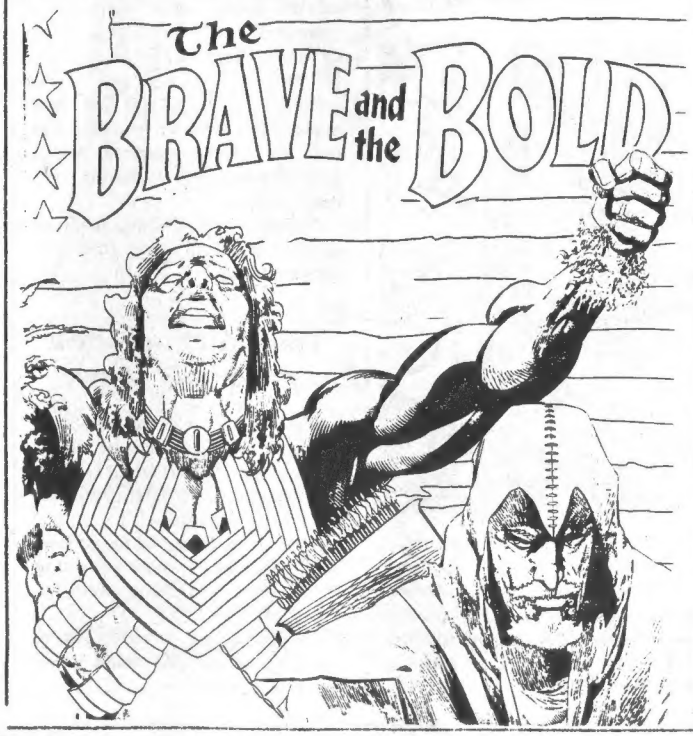
After an inauspicious debut, with Suicide Squad in issues 25-27, **Brave & Bold** premiered such series as **Justice League of America** (#28-30) **Hawkman** (#34-36, 42-44) **Teen Titans** (#54, 60) and **Metamorpho** (#58). When it was realised that creating popular new characters to a regular schedule was an impossibility, the title began to feature team-ups of established heroes and with issue 67 became a regular vehicle for Batman team-up stories before being cancelled with issue 200.

Now, DC appears to be reversing the early 1960s formula. While unknown characters used to spring out of **The Brave & The Bold**, a previously publicised title is now being placed into it, to relaunch the comic.

The promised **Green Arrow - Butcher** mini-series will now take place within **The Brave & The Bold** which begins its six-issue run in early November.

Guest-starring The Question and Black Canary, the series will be co-written by **The Butcher**'s Mike Baron (issues 1, 3, 5) and **Green Arrow**'s Mike Grell (issues 2, 4, 6).

Butcher mini-series artist Shea Anton Pensa will provide full artwork for the series which carries a $1.75 cover price and is printed in DC's New Format.



Innovation adaptations

FOLLOWING THE Dark Horse lead of adapting and continuing popular movies into a comics format, Innovation is adding Alfred Hitchcock's **Psycho, Phantom of the Opera** and **Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare** to its regular line-up.

Already publishing such tie-ins as **Nightmares on Elm Street, Dollman, Lost in Space** and **Child's Play**, Innovation will be releasing **Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare 1** on September 16, based on the sixth Freddy Krueger movie from New Line Cinema.

Adapted by Andy Mangels, the comic will be illustrated by Mike Witherby and Barb Kaalberg, with airbrush colour by Matt Hollingsworth. The 32-page title carries a $2.50 cover price.

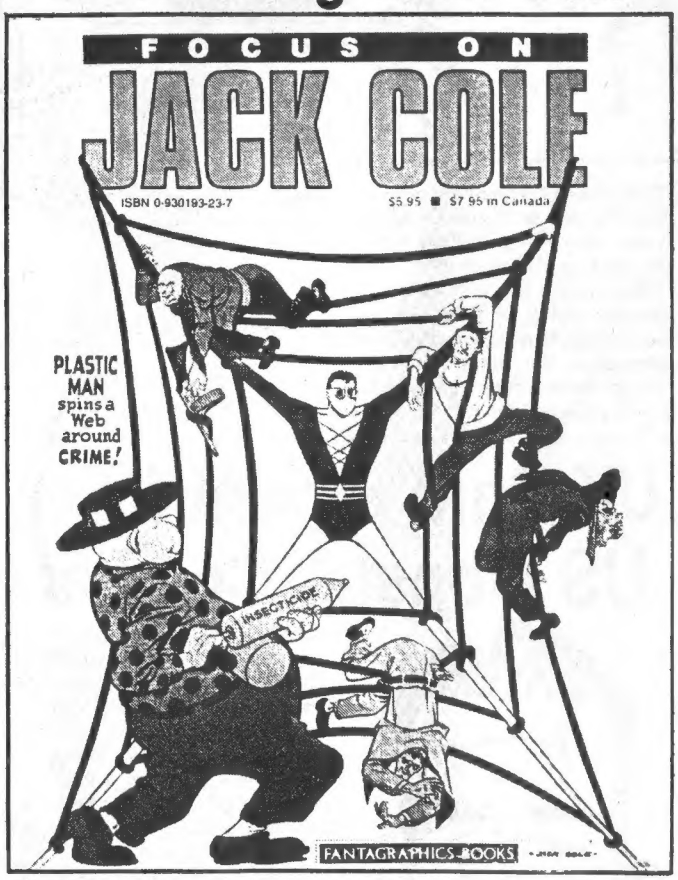
Unofficially connected most recently with the Robert (Freddy Krueger) Englund movie, **Phantom of the Opera** will adapt the original Gaston Laroux story as a 76 page $6.95 graphic novel with painted artwork by Wanda Daughton to ship mid-October.

Also on sale mid-October will be the $2.50 **Psycho 1**, adapting the classic 1960 Universal movie with full colour painted artwork by new find Felipe Echevarria.

Innovation is also reprinting its best-known series for October distribution, **The Vampire Lestat**. This 400 page colour compilation reprints the entire 12-issue adaptation of Anne Rice's novel behind a new John Bolton cover.

The Vampire Lestat trade paperback carries a $24.95 cover price, and will also be available as a Ballentine mass-market edition, with a cover by contributing artist Daerick Gross.

Celebrating Jack Cole



BY WAY of selling more copies, and as a sensible plea to DC to follow suit, Fantagraphics is resoliciting its **Focus on Jack Cole**, to celebrate the **Plastic Man** creator's 1991 award in the Jack Kirby Hall of Fame.

While the rights to **Plastic Man** rest with DC who have so far failed to follow their Archive Editions and Greatest Stories series with any of Cole's golden age work, this in-depth biography of Cole is augmented by a large portfolio of his art.

Written by sf author Ron Goulart, **Focus on Jack Cole** is a 64 pages title priced $5.95.

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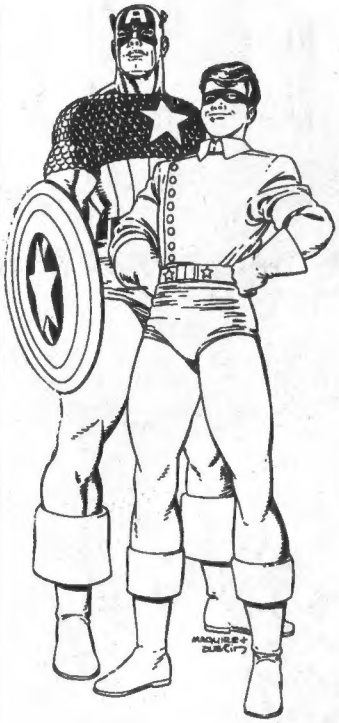
IN BRIEF



DESPITE the disappointing movie, released direct to video in the UK, **Captain America** continues to expand his titles as he celebrates his 50th anniversary.

In addition to the regular $1.00 title, **Captain America** has been chosen as one of the Spanish language co-printed editions to be distributed in America.

Both Spanish and English language editions of issue 395 go on sale October 1st and feature two popular villains Crossbones and The Red Skull, who also appears in the historic final battle against Cap in **Adventures of Captain America 4** (part cover art, by Kevin Maguire featured above).

Captain America 395 (both editions) are priced $1, and **Adventures 4**, which ships October 22, is priced $4.95

Fleetway Judgement

RISKING a considerable loss in direct market sales, the Fleetway (UK) edition of **Batman/Dredd: Judgement on Gotham** was set back to a late November shipping date last month, while the (cheaper) American edition from DC still ships October 22. Anticipate import restrictions.

Green Lantern celeb

GREEN Lantern 19 is a special double-sized issue with 48 pages behind a new Gil Kane cover.

With art by Bright, Broderick, Staton and Nodell, the Gerard Jones story tells of the image of the original Green Lantern, Alan Scott, appearing to the three current

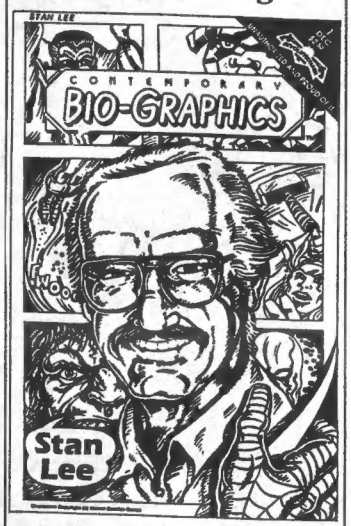
Lanterns, and leading them to discover his true origin.

The sequences featuring the Golden Age GL are pencilled by Mart Nodell, the renowned Green Lantern artist of the 1940s.

The issue should also please writer Roy Thomas, as it answers his 1960 GL letter column plea as it guest stars Scott's old sidekick Doiby Dickles, as well as Jade and Obsidian, the Thomas-created children of Alan Scott.

The $1.75 **Green Lantern 19** ships October 29.

Stan Lee biog



Renowned for its seeming disregard of US copyright laws, Revolutionary Comics stands by its constitutional right to publish comic strip material on anyone famous.

In addition to its **Pink Floyd Experience** (with issue 4 looking at "The Wall") and **Rock 'N' Roll Comics** (with issue 39 publishing "The Fall of the New Kids") the company also offers for October release **Contemporary Bio-Graphics 1: Stan Lee**.

Telling their version of the Marvel publisher's life in comicbook form, Revolutionary promotes the title with the questions "Is Mr Lee a great creator, or just a great promoter?" and "Is he a corporate puppet or a Machiavellian puppet master?".

McFarlane on Carrot

FLAMING CARROT COMICS 27 concludes the three-part crossover between Flaming Carrot and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles with a Todd McFarlane cover.

In "Fearless Umpire Killers", the new pals take on a legion of renegade umpires one night in sleepy Mill City. Told as only Bob Burden could, this $2.25 black and white title ships from Dark Horse Comics on October 1st.

Behind a new Joe Kubert cover, Rock and Batman team-up in the 22/10 shipping $2 Sgt Rock #19, by Aparo, Golden, Heath, Kubert.

Return of the Dead

GRATEFUL DEAD Comix 2 ships from Kitchen Sink Press in September.

The 40-page full colour magazine format title continues to interpret the lyrics to Grateful Dead songs as comic strips together with comics versions of incidents in the band's career.

Contributions include work from Timothy Truman ("Cumberland Blues", pictured), Dan Steffan ("Terrapin Station" Part 2) and illustrator Frank Gresham ("Friend of the Devil").

Writer John Wooley and underground mainstay Rand Holmes also appear, recounting an 1972 French incident and the title is produced with the full aproval of the band.

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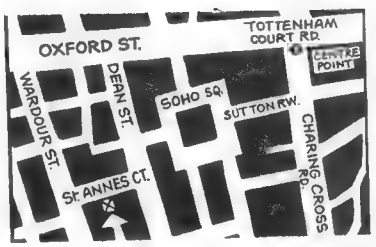

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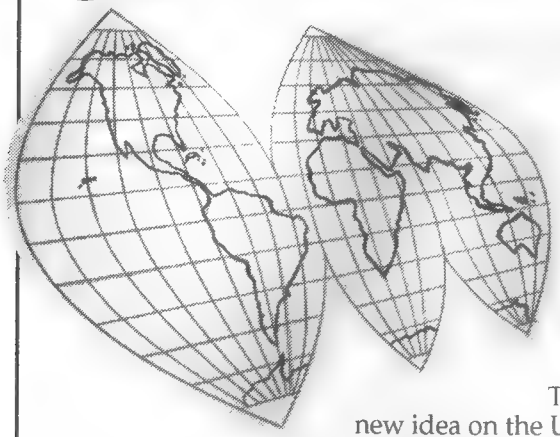

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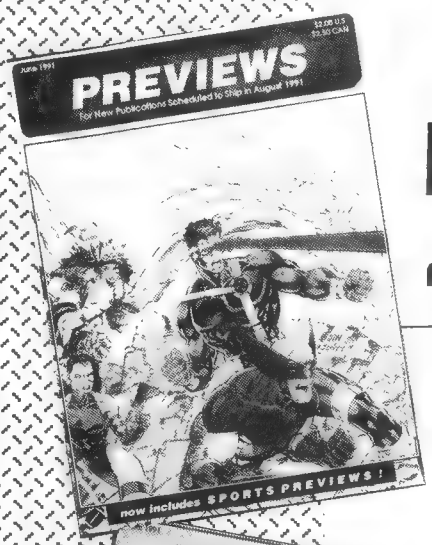

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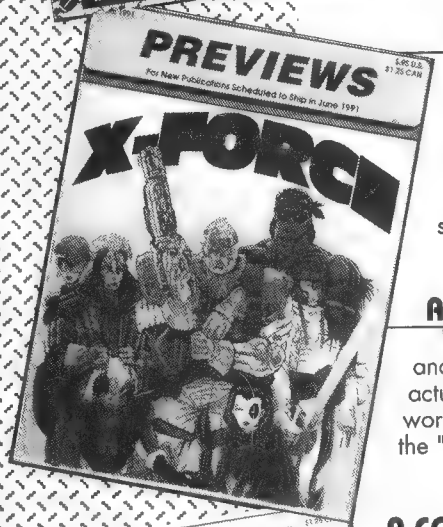

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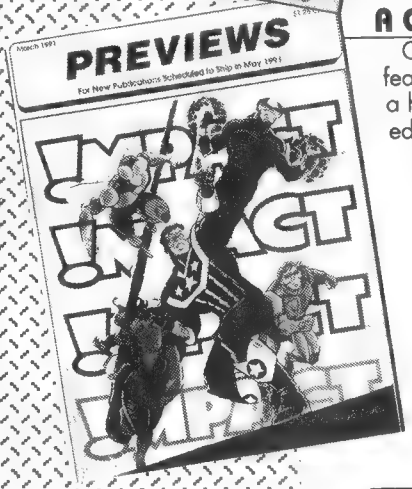

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Beyond Diego: American Update

Last month's behind the scenes feature on the San Diego ComiCon proved so popular, we convinced our correspondent to produce another authored report from within the American comics industry.

WITH THE Marvel share offer requiring an increased product output to keep backers happy, you'd expect DC to be flexing its publishing muscles to retain its position and prove its worth to troubled parent company Time-Warner.

Needing all the help it can get, DC's hydra-like parent (see our film, buy our record/tape/book/comic adaptation) didn't fare too well with its own share issue. In fact, it was trying to raise no less than $2.76 *billion* to service debts, but ended up having to put out a new offer, discounting up to $10 a share to get any interest from the European and Japanese markets.

So where's DC's position in this cut-and-save operation? We are about to see the release of lots of its announced three dozen new titles, even though winter is a dead sales period. But with only seven truly new titles surrounded by 13 revivals, a handful of expensive Bat-books, a line of way too pricey reprints, a couple of licenced titles and a few oneshots, we are not talking major movers here.

Modesty Blaise? Peter O'Donnell started the newspaper version in 1963 but this will be his first comicbook work. I'm sure the guy's terrific but would you back him against the like of Peter David and Todd McFarlane as a crowd puller?

Howard Chaykin's **Ironwolf**, managed only 3 issues back in 1974. Still, repackage old ideas with hefty cover prices and you don't need to sell many to make a few bucks.

Chaykin's warmed over projects also include teaming up with Michael (Mr Private) Golden to produce a series of DC classic sf adaptations (again) including Philip Wylie's original inspiration for Superman, the 1933 novel **Gladiator** (again).

Looking beyond DC's announced new releases, there are a few logical ideas now being bounced around the offices. **Salvo** is set be DC's answer to Marvel's **Punisher**. Sure, they've already launched their **Deathstroke the Terminator** title, with **Punisher** style covers and non-**Punisher** style interiors, but **Salvo** will be aimed squarely at the big-gun groupies.

Chris ("Do You Want To Hear My Side Of It") Claremont is to adapt his own novels **First Flight** and **Grounded** into comics format for DC as well as producing a team-up (as opposed to battle) with **Aliens & Predators** for not-so dark Dark Horse.

DC is also handling an official Prince comic in its attempt to reach a wider audience. Apparently the plot resembles the recent MC Hammer "Don't Hurt 'Em" video with Prince heading back to his home town to find it overrun with drugs and vice.

Aiming at repeat max media coverage, DC has finally decided that the Lois Lane/Superman engagement is to terminate ... with 'marriage. Could this mean a chance to reprint all those earlier imaginary versions? No date set for the real thing, but they can only milk it once so don't hold your breath.

On the casualty side, **The Shadow Strikes** is being cancelled, while **Sgt Rock** (which shouldn't have lost money as a reprint of such wonderful stuff) is becoming an all-new annual event.

The so-far disappointing Tundra is splashing out more of its Turtle money to set up a UK division with Dave (Itchy Feet) Elliott maintaining his whirlwind stopover tour of publishers (Fleetway, Atomeka, Deadline, Epic and DC) by abandoning John Brown Publishing to head up the company. Does this mean Alan Moore's **Big Numbers** (financially bailed out by Tundra) might manage a third issue now Bill Sienkiewicz has returned? Rumour has it Bill would rather sell out but, following proposed substitute Dave McKean dropping the book, there are apparently no takers.

New Dark Horse projects include showing Marvel how to handle **RoboCop**, Howard Hawke's **The Thing** (by Brit John Higgins), and, in the wake of the Acme/Eclipse crumbling relationship, **James Bond** by the logical but inspired Batman "Prey" team of Doug Moench and Paul Gulacy.

Meanwhile, to keep shareholders and the bank sweet, Marvel is cutting its editorial pages soon to make way for more advertising. It's also aiming at 120 titles a month for 1992 (that's about 50% up on 1991) with two or three new series coming out every month.

New titles to include: **Punisher: Kill Zone** (yet another on-going monthly for macho-man) by John Romita Jr as well as a **Punisher** one-shot set in the wild west by veteran Italian artist Alberto Giolitti (of **Turok** fame). A new **Hulk** mini is planned, **Tomorrow Wars**. **Secret Wars 3** has the working title of **Infinity Wars** (me, I prefer **Secret Gauntlet**). **Mobius, The Living Vampire** is set for a comeback. **Adam Warlock** is to get his own title yet again. Ann Nocenti and Rick Leonardi are to do a fill-in on **Spider-Man** in the wake of Eric Larsen's 5-part "Return of the Sinister Six" storyline. Mike Zeck's sequel to the excellent Kraven saga is still only half drawn. Marvel's lost **The Nam** (who says comics don't mirror reality?). John Byrne is shedding some of his workload to make space for more mutant involvement, with art on **Namor** going to John Romita Jr, while **Iron Man** will be looking for a new scripter after issue 277.

Also on the Marvel cards, a New York cop comic still looking for a title, **X-Street Blues** maybe?

Finally, Marvel proves that success hasn't changed them a bit; they're still adding names to their prominently positioned wallchart of blacklisted artists who have ever done work for ex-Marvel editor-in-chief Jim Shooter's Valiant Comics. So how come they're still using Barry (**Solar**) Windsor-Smith?

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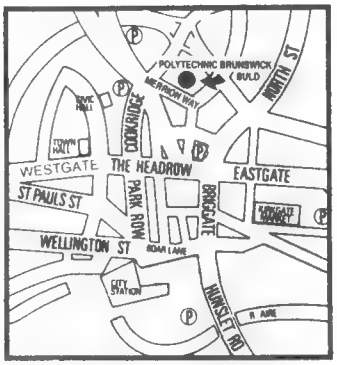

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NEWS europe

Where have all the comics gone?

An editorial

LAST YEAR, we ran a front page headline announcing *"Fleetway invests £1,000,000"*. On the hundredth anniversary of **Comics Cuts**, the enthusiastic new Maxwell management of Fleetway was making bold statements of intent, "... a quantum leap in Fleetway's youth publishing output" and "... a major impact on the youth publishing market".

The result of "an intensive research programme", Fleetway's promotion drive was a media blitz, with reams of national press coverage, backed by a tv and print campaign worth over three quarters of a million pounds.

The campaign was to segment Fleetway's once massive output into four areas. The company described them as: juvenile comics (including **Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles**), pre-teen titles (including **Eagle**), specialist youth titles (**Crisis, 2000AD**) and spin-offs (such as the Dick Tracy movie adaptation).

Now, eighteen months later, everyone is asking; what happened?

Of the titles mentioned as segment examples, one flopped miserably (**Eagle**), one went off the boil (**Turtles**), one never happened (the **Dick Tracy** movie adaptation), one has yet to make a profit (**Crisis**) and the final one seems able to survive any setback (**2000AD**).

The new innovative ideas have almost all been replaced by budget-conscious reprints, from Europe, America and the company's own archive.

It's an old advertising adage that Britain is five years behind America in sales techniques. Looking at the comics industry, that is certainly true. While America is aggressively marketing uniquely packaged comics, surpassing World War II sales peaks, and publishing more titles than ever in the industry's history, Britain's comics industry is in danger of becoming extinct.

London Editions tried to replicate the early '70s Marvel UK approach with British reprints of superhero titles with two small successes and four total failures.

British Marvel has twice recently announced only one new mini-series (**Death's Head**), and twice cancelled it. Instead it has reverted to the low risk approach of reprints, with the promise of a new anthology title for both Death's Head and Pendragon "around the turn of the year". Editor-in-chief Paul Neary, once a driven and inspired artist, admits that any new material will be produced "adhering to sound Marvel-style storytelling and character development".

Titan Books seems to be content to become a coffee table Alan Class of this decade, only publishing reprint titles already successful overseas. We are not Europeans (yet), and we are never likely to become Americans.

Reprints from abroad can gain a cult following, occasionally even a brief massive one, but we have our own unique sensitivities which need to be reflected in material designed by people who have lived and grown up in Britain.

If comics on an adult or juvenile level are to strike a chord with a mass audience, they must reflect our own strengths and weaknesses. Not American superheroes or European film noir. It is hardly surprising that **Viz** has been the success story of the decade. It was a logical extension of uniquely British roots, **The Beano**, Monty Python, and slapstick comedians like Benny Hill and Frankie Howerd.

The Future

The biggest costs in publishing are print and promotion. The expense of artwork is dust by comparison. Why save money with cheap reprints but still pay the same production costs. Reprints have never sustained an audience, and could never bring in additional income from licensing and syndication.

Without experimentation, there can be no innovation. To replicate is to stagnate.

If **Viz** can sell over a million, why settle for 25,000 with short-term reprints? The direct sale market, with instant access across the Atlantic through specialist distributors has been become a safety net for experimentation. If the orders are low, you don't print.

British creators are peaking in popularity, yet only small and underfinanced companies like Apocalypse and Atomeka seem to be aware of this market's actual existence. Britain has a rich history of comics creators and creations, there must be hope for it to have an equally rich future.

NOW — TWO DEALERS ROOMS FOR MORE CHOICE

COMICBOOK MARKETPLACE

1991

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 3

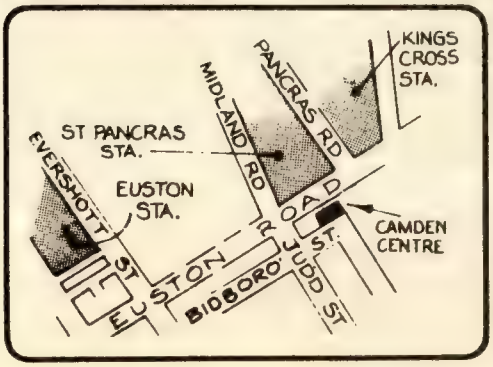
CAMDEN CENTRE BIDBOROUGH ST LONDON WC1

The Comicbook Marketplace is held every two months at the Camden Centre and is just a few minutes walk from King's Cross, St. Pancras and Euston Stations.

There are more than ninety tables with over 200,000 comicbooks and magazines on sale, including S.F., fantasy, film and T.V. related items, from Britain's top dealers.

Sandwiches, rolls, snacks, and hot and cold drinks are available throughout the day from the refreshment area located in the dealers room.

How to get there Bus: 10, 14, 30, 45, 46, 63, 73, 77a, 214, 221 to Kings Cross or Camden Town Hall. Underground: Circle, Metropolitan, Northern, Piccadilly or Victoria Line to Kings Cross.



DOORS OPEN MID-DAY
ADMISSION FREE

FUTURE COMICBOOK MARKETPLACE DATES:
NOVEMBER 3RD 1991, JANUARY 5TH 1992, MARCH 8TH 1992, MAY 10TH 1992.

Stateside at Virgin

MAKING a long-anticipated move towards the massive central London catchment area, Barnet-based Stateside Comics has announced its new agreement with Virgin Retail, to establish a West End base for its operation.

Founded only two years, Stateside has quickly become well-known for its muscular marketing strategies and promotional campaigns both outside of and within the comics medium.

The 'Stateside at Virgin' launch will be no exception, with the opening weekend offering prizes including **Spider-Man 1: Platinum Edition,** signings by Dave Gibbons, and personal appearances by 'Judge Dredd' and 'Spider-Man'.

With a design style reflecting its art deco surrounding, the new outlet will be computer linked to the company's head office, to allow any West End visitor access to a back issue stock estimated by Stateside to be over 250,000 comics.

Joint Chief Executive of Stateside Comics PLC, Paul Sassienie, said "Both our companies are renowned for their innovative and progressive retail policies. Together we can now provide the comic collector with an unrivalled choice of comics, with a level of expertise and service that has been clearly lacking."

Previously, the concession had been held by Fantastic Store's Paul Coppin, who continues to operate Virgin Comics out of the Tottenham Court Road Virgin Megastore, as well as Virgin's Nottingham and Brighton outlets.

But, hit by the recession, Coppin's Birmingham branch is said to be closing shortly as Coppin searches for central self-contained premises with the distinct advantage of shop window space to attract passing trade.

On the subject of passing trade, Naked Eye Production's Andrew Sewell, who is coordinating the Stateside at Virgin launch, acknowledged the drawback of not having window space, but added that discussions were taking place to allow for such when media events were being held.

Stateside at Virgin opens on Saturday, 28th September at 9.30am.

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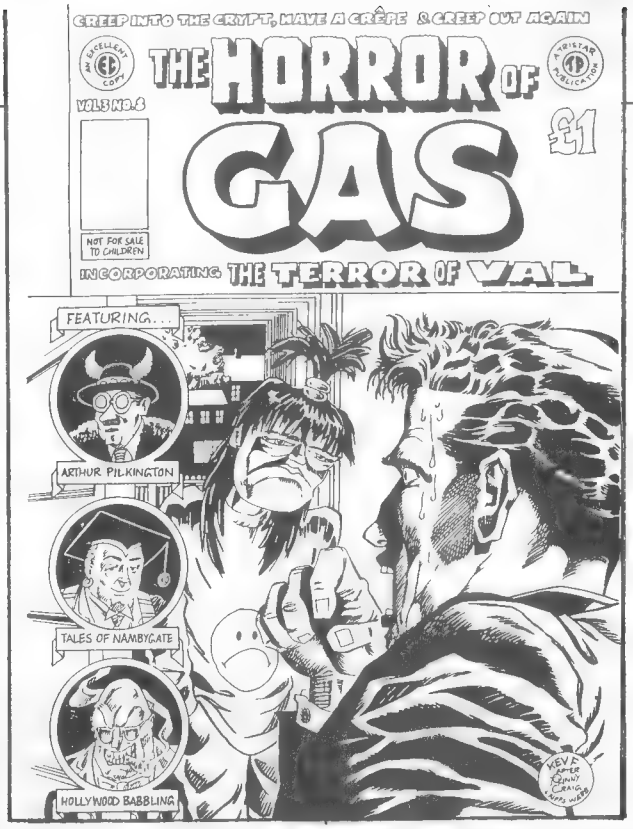


Gas parodies of famous American comic covers

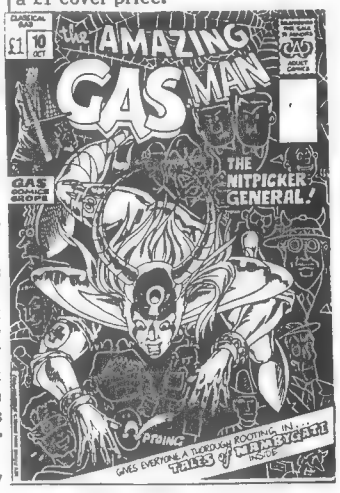
CARTOONIST, wit and fondly-remembered chronicler of "The Wednesday Page", Kev F. Sutherland has been producing spoof covers at the expense of **Gas** and **Zit** publishers, Tri-Star.

Together with David Leach, Kev has created a series of American comic classics parodies currently appearing on **Gas.**

Johnny Craig's infamous "axe-in-the-head" 1952 **Vault of Horror** cover is spoofed for **Gas 8,** while issue ten parodies **Spider-Man 100.**

Kev describes the new look as "a deliberate move away from the trend of ripping-off **Viz**" and goes on to say that "the radical facelift has been designed to emphasise **Gas**'s satirical edge and its better quality humour strips."

Gas is published monthly and distributed nationally, with a £1 cover price.



Glasgow small press titles in merger move

THAT HOTBED of new comics talent Glasgow has seen a merger of two of its newly launched small-press comics.

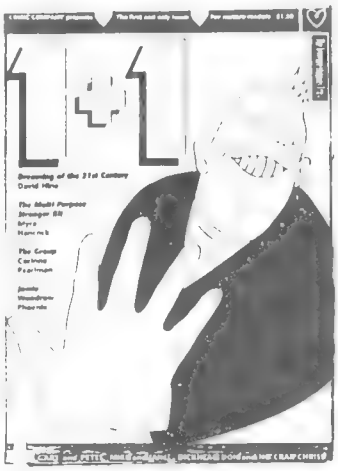
In a style reminiscent of 1970s boy's comics, **Frankly** will be merging with **Loaded,** and absorbing the best material of the two titles under the **Frankly** logo.

The decision to merge the two took place when **Frankly** editor Simon Mackie and **Loaded**'s Gary M. Gibson realised that they were producing titles of a distinctly similar nature.

It is to be hoped that, in true IPC tradition, the merged title will benefit from the double-sized audience.

The new **Frankly** is available for £1.80 from Simon Mackie, Calton House, 2 Claythorn Street, Glasgow G40 2HP.

Top creators combine for comics as educational tools: AIDS, Sex and Love



PROVING the benefits of comics as educational tools in an interesting and easily accessable format, Comic Company and London University's Institute of Education have published **1 + 1**, a £1.50 high quality A4 comic which grew out of the work of the HIV/AIDS Young People's Project.

The two-year collaboration was financed by the National Aids Trust and The Terrence Higgins Trust, and has resulted in highly readable title with contributions by Myra Hancock, David Hyne, Corinne Pearlman and Woodrow Phoenix.

Single copies cost £1.50 + 50p p&p, and, together with bulk enquiries, should be addressed to: The Terrance Higgins Trust, 54 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1 8JU (tel: 071 831 0330).

Editors Philip Boys and Corinne Pearlman have also produced two paperbacks for Penguin, **Facts of Life** and **First Love.**

Both priced £3.99 and available later this month, these cartoon anthologies look at various aspects of love, life, sex and relationships as seen through the eyes of some of Britain's top cartoonists.

But David - don't you know about the FACTS OF LIFE?*
Fiona, don't leave! You'll always be my FIRST LOVE!*
Oh, Shut up
*A comic book edited by PHILIP BOYS & CORINNE PEARLMAN

Comag to import X-Force and X-Men as 65p newsstand titles

WITH ITS September cover dated titles, Marvel has increased the UK cover price on 14 $1 newsstand comics from 60p to 65p, distributed through Comag.

The line of comics, sold to newsagents in pre-selected packs consists of **Captain America, Daredevil, Uncanny X-Men, Incredible Hulk, Avengers, Thor, Iron Man, X-Factor, Silver Surfer, New Warriors, Guardians of the Galaxy** and **Punisher. Fantastic Four** and **West Coast Avengers** being the most noticeable by their absence.

In addition, newsagents can also order by title other Marvels: the fortnightly **Marvel Comics Presents** (which increases to 70p issue 83, on sale September 23) & the black and white magazine **Savage Sword of Conan** (£1.10 from issue 189) and **Excalibur**

Recognising the wider distribution offered by title ordering, as many newsagents no longer carry the mixed Marvel packs, Comag has added **X-Force** as a distributed title, with issue 1 (all four card-carrying bagged versions) priced 80p, reducing to 65p from issue 2.

X-Men, all four cover versions, is set to be distributed at 80p, also dropping to 65p with issue number two.

With the price increase on fully distributed titles, and importers recommending 70p prices on air-freighted $1 books, the saving is reduced to only 5p a title for those who prefer to wait for newsstand editions.

... A far cry from the pioneering early 1970s when fans returned from American holidays with suitcases bulging, or came hot-fotting back from local US Air Base PXs, to sell their 'advance imports' at twice the regular distributed prices.

COMICS INTERNATIONAL

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GIVE ME LIBERTY

★ AN AMERICAN DREAM ★

★ AVAILABLE NOW IN ONE VOLUME ★

A PENGUIN GRAPHIC NOVEL £8.99

Comic shops hold raffles and auctions to help London Cartoon Centre in crisis

COMICS INTERNATIONAL's continuing London Cartoon Centre Appeal began to gain momentum last month, primarily due to the efforts of two comics shops.

While publishers and distributors have been noticeably silent, Salisbury's **Floppy Tongue Comics** auctioned an autographed set of **X-Force 1**, with London-based John Legge placing the highest bid of £50.

Together with his cheque for the LCC, London comic shop **Graphically Speaking** raised £153 for the underfunded West London cartoon school.

Graphically Speaking's Scott Manning reports; "The day was a huge success with us giving away hundreds of pounds worth of goodies. The raffle raised £78.50 with 26 prizes donated by Marvel UK, John Brown Publishing (**Blast**), Titan Distributors and Mike & Meena Conroy of **Edge of Forever** comic shop."

Scott added that he was especially pleased with the donation of over 16 prizes from the Conroys, who, he adds, were the only dealers approached who actually contributed.

Contributions to the London Cartoon Centre, part of the registered charity the Portobello Trust, have also been received from private individuals including a well-known magazine journalist, Iain Lynam and Mr J. Kingswood.

Readers are reminded of the imminent fund-raising event at London's Guinness World of Records Exhibition, Piccadilly Circus on Saturday September 7, when over 120 top comics creators will attempt to create the world's longest comic strip.

Readers wishing to donate to the London Cartoon Centre's survival campaign can send contributions, made payable to The Portobello Trust, care of **Comics International**, PO Box 1937, London N3 ?LP.

COMIC MARTS

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SATURDAY: OCTOBER 19th, NOVEMBER 30th

LIVERPOOL

CREST HOTEL, LORD NELSON STREET, LIVERPOOL

SUNDAY: OCTOBER 13th, NOVEMBER 10th

SHEFFIELD

MAIN HALL, SHEFFIELD POLYTECHNIC, HOWARD STREET

SATURDAY: SEPTEMBER 21st, NOVEMBER 9th

NOTTINGHAM

THE BROADWAY, BROAD STREET, NOTTINGHAM

SATURDAY: NOVEMBER 2nd, DECEMBER 14th

NEWCASTLE

BLACKFRIARS HALL, NEW BRIDGE STREET, NEWCASTLE

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CANCELLED UNTIL 1992

DEALERS ENQUIRIES WELCOME

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OPENS MIDDAY

More tie-ins from Titan

FURTHER INCREASING its list of film tie-ins, Titan Books is to publish **Aliens vs Predator** as a full colour trade paperback this December.

Continuing their liaison with originating US publisher, Dark Horse, Titan already has in print **Aliens Books 1 & 2, Aliens Earth War, Terminator: Tempest** and **Predator.**

With the original **Aliens vs Predator** Dark Horse mini-series selling in excess of 400,000 copies of each issue with little UK exposure, Titan has high hopes for their £7.50 compilation.

Follow-up to Ceasefire

● **Voyeurs: Women See Sex** is to be FANNY's second title, also an anthology, scheduled to appear in September this year, and using the same format as Knockabout Comics critically-acclaimed **7 Ages of Women.** "I can see that title will probably make them look at customs," Carol Bennett told **Comics International.**

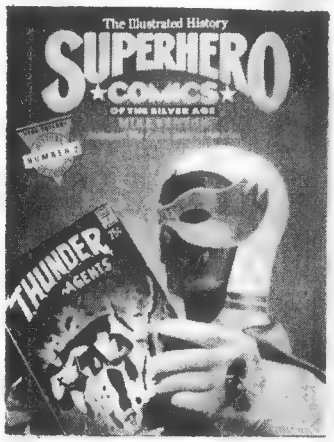
● FANNY was established in July 1990 with the express purpose of acting as an international forum for women comics creators. "We really had to search for those first few women artists," revealed Carol Bennett, "there were only 11 members of FANNY then.

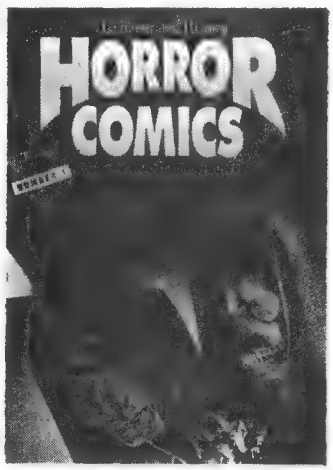
"But the organisation's really expanded; we now have 88 members, with over 40 members overseas".

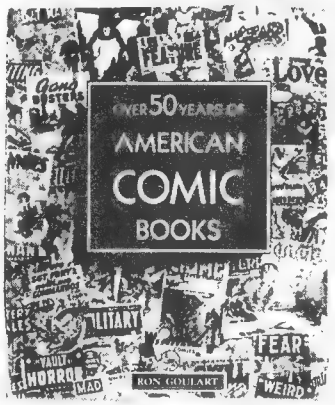
● FANNY's first annual meeting took place in Covent Garden, with more than half the membership and leading women commissioning editors attending.

● **The Women's Strip Illustrators and Writers Directory** is Carol Bennett's and Cath Tate's latest project on behalf of women creators. Any writers or artists wishing to be involved in either this or with FANNY should write to Carol Bennet, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ, or to Cath Tate, 39 Kingswood Road, London SW2 4JE.

The Growing Industry of the Comicbook Book







With the sudden rise in popularity and sales of comic books, a wave of books about comics is soon to reach shops for the 1991 Christmas trade.

The first has already arrived, the large format Virgin UK edition of Les Daniels **Marvel: Five Fabulous Decades of the World's Greatest Comics**. Priced £30, is has narrowly beaten the onslaught of UK and US titles about to follow.

● **The Illustrated History of Superhero Comics of the Silver Age** continues the trend for wordy titles and is a 200 page 8x11" hardback containing 400 colour illustrations.

Author Mike Benton includes every important superhero of the late 1950s through to the late 1960s in his chronicling of the Silver Age.

In addition, this $24.95 title, shipping in October, includes profiles of 90 top artists and a complete comics checklist.

● **The Illustrated History of Horror Comics** is a companion title by Mike Benton, priced $21.95 covering the horror genre from **Classics Illustrated**'s Frankenstein to Clive Barker's **Hellraiser**. Detailed entries feature publisher, artist(s) and publication date as well as highlights of each issue and an extended critical narration throughout.

The book is 152 pages, with over 300 full colour illustrations and is an 8x11" hardback shipping in October.

● **Over 50 Years of American Comic Books** is a part colour 320 page hardback by sf author and comicbook historian Ron Goulart.

Sized 10x12", it presents the complete story of the comics industry, complete with full colour illustrations, key frame enlargements, classic cover reproductions, page reprints and strips reprints in a refreshing change from so many books which show covers only.

Based on the author's track record, this $29.95 October shipping book should be of very high quality.

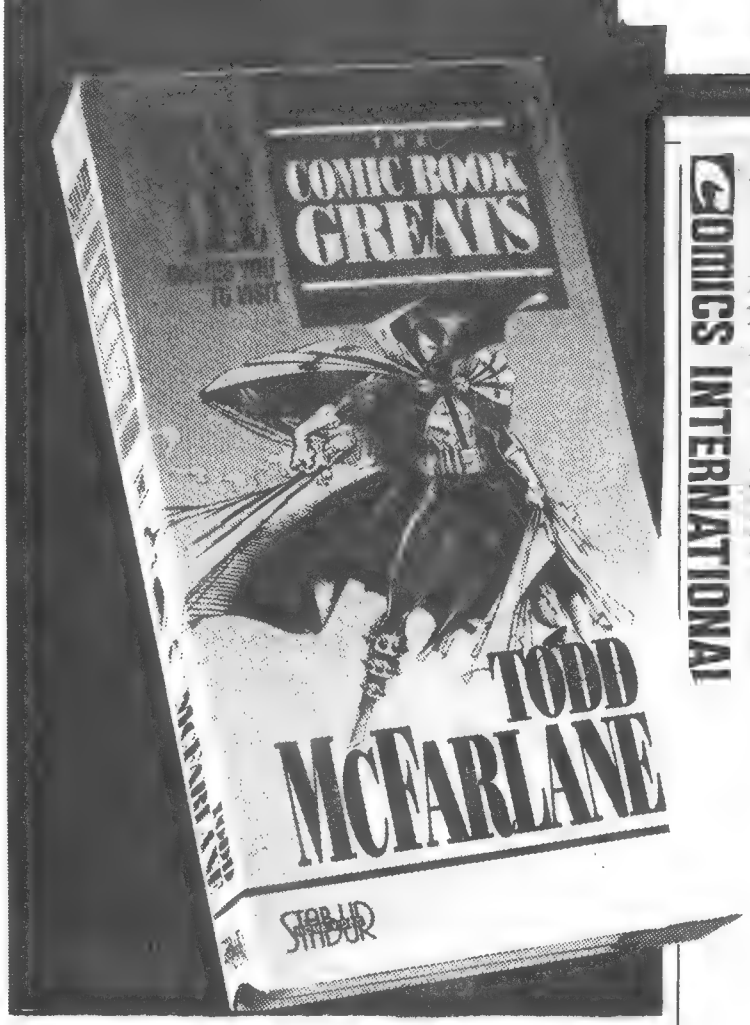
● **From Aargh! to Zap! - Harvey Kurtzman's Visual History of the Comics** is a softcover tribute to Kurtzman. This 11x15" book celebrates the work of Kurtzman with 75 full colour illustrations.

Shipping October, it is priced $25.

● **The Comic Book Greats** puts a different approach on comics history, with Marvel publisher Stan Lee taking fans on a video trip behind the scenes with the industry's hottest writers and artists.

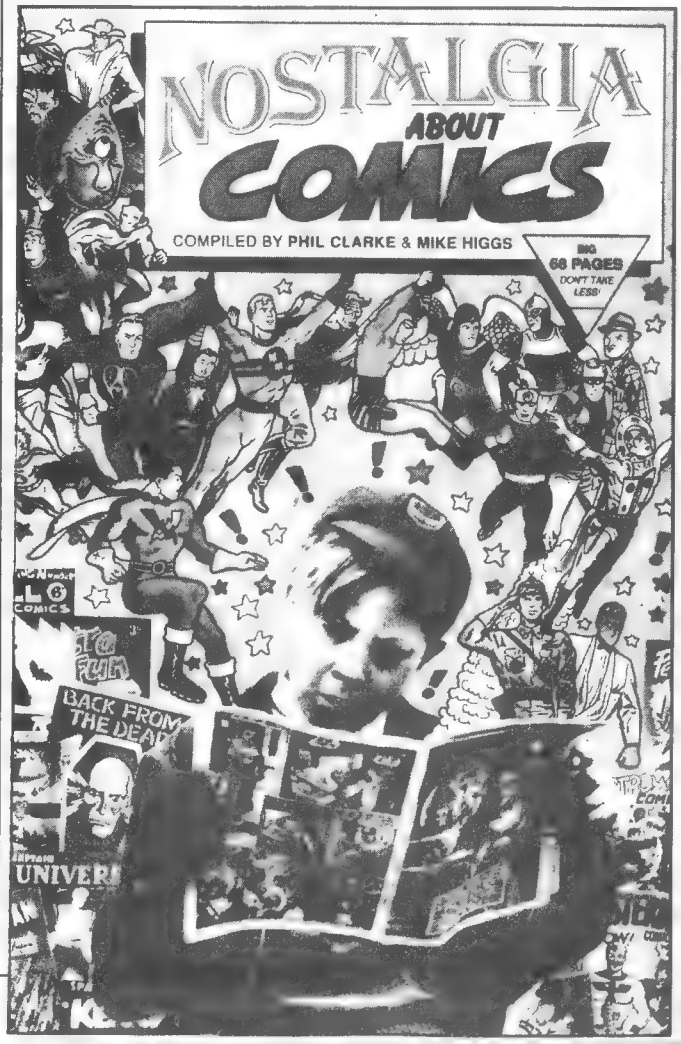
Volume One of this Stabur Home Video series features Todd McFarlane, and looks at his work from early assignments on **Batman** and **Coyote** through to his best-selling **Spider-Man**. Todd also talks candidly to Stan Lee about his love of comics, his future plans and the new characters he is creating.

Currently available only for US systems, it is priced $19.95.



● **Nostalgia about Comics** is a 64 page £5.99 trade paperback from **Fantazia** publishers Pegasus Press published on September 26. Authors Phil Clarke and Mike (**Moonbird**) Higgs present a nostalgic souvenir of the 1940s and 1950s featuring the comics available in Britain at the time.

Covering titles from Canada, Australia, America and Britain, the book reproduces covers and pages from both famous and obscure titles and retails at £5.99.



Savoy title seized: A cautionary tale

Despite a long tradition of publishing fantasy and science fiction, Savoy Books has invariably been anything but a traditional publisher. Its titles have pushed at the boundaries of contemporary fiction, often alienating the establishment in the process. While several of Savoy's backlist are now regarded as classics ahead of their time, each idiosyncratic step taken endangers the company's very existance. Sarah Bolesworth examines their latest encounter with the courts.

MANCHESTER-based Savoy Books has been forced to push its publishing schedule back "by at least six months" as a result of the settlement of a legal battle with the syndication giant, United Features Syndicate Inc.

UFS initiated the action when their attention was drawn to an issue of **Meng & Ecker**, the satirical mini-series published by Savoy Books during 1990 -'91. The comic included a four-frame sex sequence featuring a cat bearing a great resemblance to Jim Davis' famous Garfield character, which is handled by UFS.

During the 10-month dispute, extensive investigations of Savoy Books' activities were undertaken by UFS solicitors or their agents. These included the covert use of an ex-Vice Squad officer and resulted in the generation of "two large mail sacks" full of affadavits and depositions, produced with the aim of forcing a seizure of all copies of the book and artwork relating to it. **Meng & Ecker**'s total circulation at the time was 2,000, and its distribution was limited to a handful of outlets nationwide.

Savoy Books, whose history of independent and controversial publishing reaches back to 1975, has found itself forced to comply with a prohibitive financial settlement in what UFS must regard as a highly effective way of signalling their policy on what they consider to be copyright infringement.

The Tijuana Tradition

Despite the contention over **Meng & Ecker**, the satirical use of popular cartoons is as traditional as the characters themselves, dating back over sixty years to the infamous **Tijuana Bibles**, with Popeye, Dick Tracy and friends in compromising situations.

It is inevitible that such high profile creations become targets for satire. Garfield recently appeared - in overtly sexual pose - as '50s pin-up star Betty Page in America's **The Comic Buyers' Guide**.

Whether creators or their agents prosecute these violations is dependent on numerous elements.

One major factor is whether the copyright holders feel that the perceived morality of their cartoon character will be damaged by association with the satire. UFS argued that this was the case with prosecution witness Ausbert De Arce (managing director of a Dutch company owned by UFS) asserting that "Garfield is perceived as a wholesome and endearing character, with a hint of child-like rebelliousness, with whom all the family can identify".

Other factors, including the probability of a substantial financial settlement, are weighed against the cost of investigation, and would have featured prominently in the UFS decision to prosecute Savoy Books.

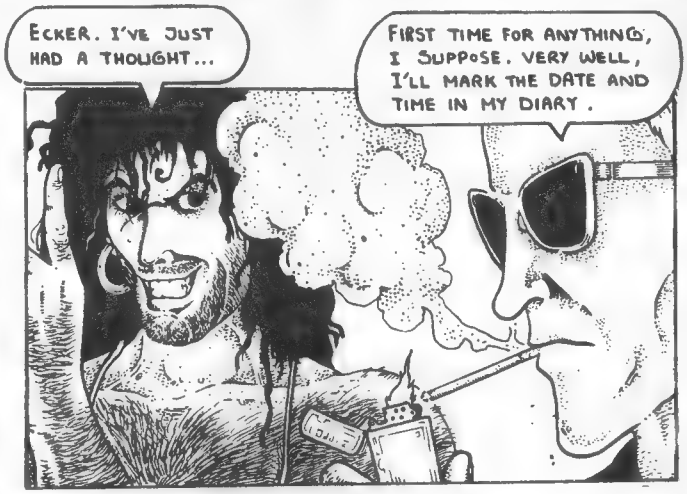
Entry of the Glory Boys

During its prestigious publishing history (which has included the work of Michael Moorcock, Harlan Ellison, Henry Treece, William Burroughs, Mike Harding and Charles Platt) Savoy Books has attracted the unwelcome attention of the Greater Manchester police force on more than one occasion.

It was, however, the appearance of the doppelganger of methodist ex-chief of police James Anderton on the front cover of issue 1 and then in issue 3 of **Meng & Ecker** which tipped the scales of local justice against Savoy Books. Savoy outlets were subjected to multiple raids for allegedly carrying "obscene" publications; the publishing house itself became the watchword for all that was subversive in Manchester: Savoy was the unacceptable face of the city which James Anderton had pledged to clean up.

Savoy Books was victimised by the same smear tactics so often seen in the media - and, incredibly, survived. But this legacy of controversy was key to the process which brought about the recent United Feature Syndicate case.

A Manchester restaurant, the Meng & Ecker, offended by Savoy's alleged use of their name, saw the opportunity to take action when the lampoon of Garfield appeared. Pleading insufficient funds to prosecute, they contacted the UK licencees of Garfield, who passed their letter on to UFS, who would otherwise have been blissfully unaware of the existence of the book.



Above: Meng (left) suffers a snappy retort from Ecker. Below: The two chums skateboard towards hell. Artwork by Guidio, script by Dave Britton.

HELL IS MORE FUN THAN WHIRLEY RANGE THERE MUST BE A MORAL INVOLVED SOMEWHERE
PICKLE MY Y-FRONTS...! ITS BULLWINKLE. MY HERO..
DEF BEFORE DISH-NIR
CRUNCH!
JESUS CHRIST

Meng & Ecker: Righteous

But because of the history of Savoy and the righteous indignation of a Manchester cafe, UFS had no choice but to defend the creator's copyright. To keep it, as the prosecution stated, *"free of any suggestion of violence or 'sex appeal' that attaches to many other modern characters"*, because *"even a faint suggestion of obscenity would destroy Garfield as a marketing tool"*.

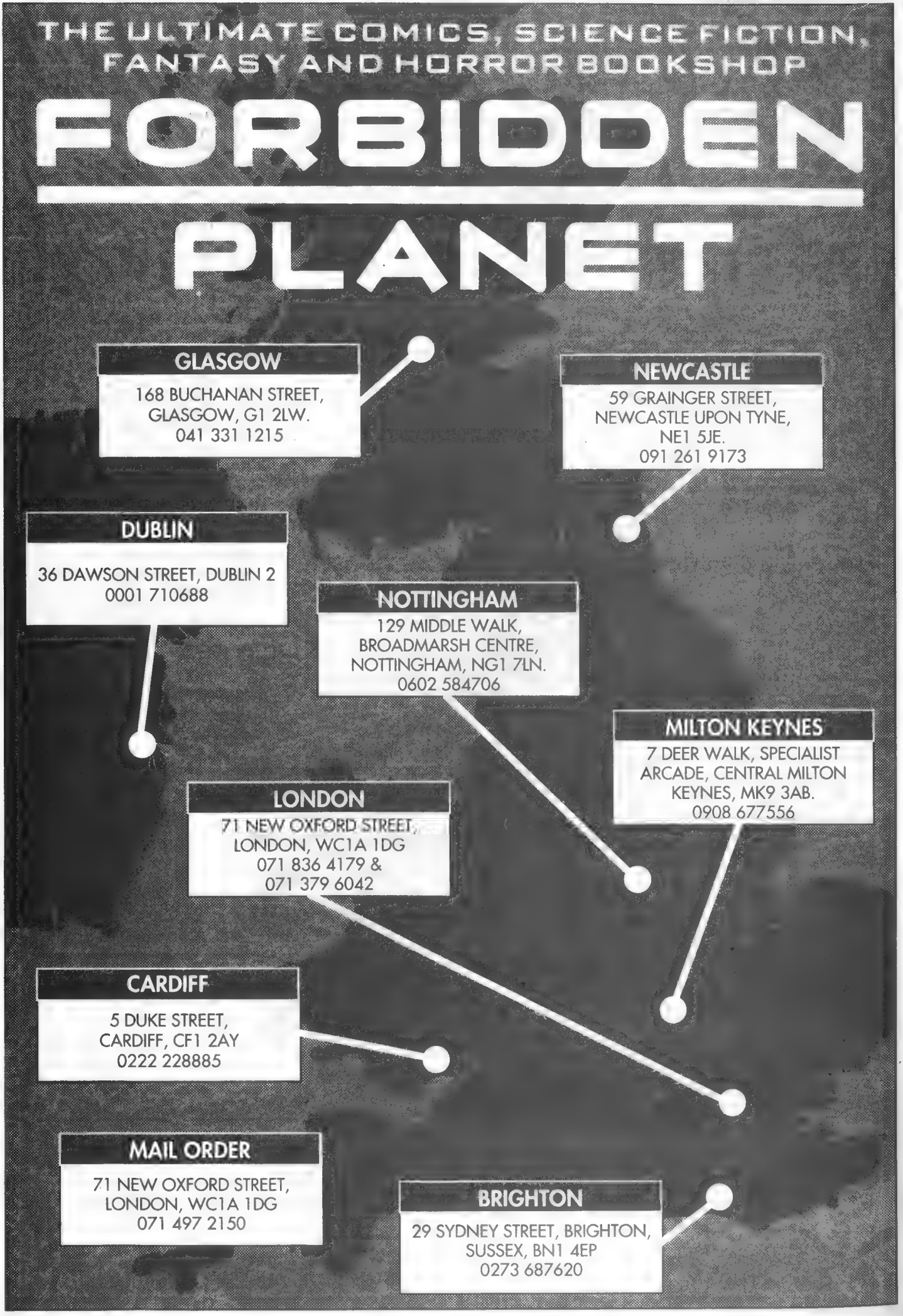
A Warning Salvo...

Publishers like Savoy, who acknowledge the risk-taking nature of their work, are usually more than willing to accept that part of their business will be defending themselves against legal action resulting from their publications. But the Garfield case was exceptional: United Feature Syndicate outgunned Savoy to such an extent that they missed one of the points of the litigation, damages.

As Mike Butterworth told **Comics International**, "For all United Feature's thoroughness in the business of detection they were unable to apprehend the most obvious fact about Savoy - our tiny status relative to their own."

The might of UFS succeeded in stopping a 2,000 circulation comic, but in doing so drew considerable attention to the satirical use they were so eager to subdue. They also failed in any secondary aim to secure monetary gain from the infringement.

● **Meng & Ecker** will continue later this year, with the **Reverbstorm** mini-series and CD single (featuring the late Jessie Mathews) to be released along with a new biography of Michael Moorcock in the Spring of 1992.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MEDIA FILE

Associate editor Sarah Bolesworth looks at recent media coverage of comics and related product

WHILE THE REST of the world rocked with the news from the USSR, the comics industry has been preparing itself for two important events in this year's calendar: the UK Comic Art Convention and the staging of *The Longest Comic Strip in the World* (7.9.'91; proceeds to the London Cartoon Centre).

Naked Eye's Andrew Sewell and David (**V For Vendetta**) Lloyd hatched up the idea for the marathon comic strip, immediately setting about persuading UK artists to give their time for the strip, and hustling up media attention to justify the sponsors' money spent in supporting the event.

The "Longest Strip" (storyline by Alan Moore) is guaranteed a fair spread of tv, radio and press coverage, especially given the level of support from the Guinness World of Records Exhibition.

"The media don't seem to be in the least bit disaffected with comics," Andrew Sewell told **Comics International**. "The artists are enthusiastic as well," he added. "We've got over a hundred coming to the Trocadero. But as to the publishers, who are meant to be sponsoring the event itself, their response has so far been pathetic."

Egg on The Face

The notion that the media is sick of comics, most particularly *adult* comics, had brief currency in the industry as a result of scaremongering by what Paul (Mission to Explain) Gravett called "jaded style journalists" (**The Scotsman**, August 1991).

In an article published in **The Scotsman**'s guide to the Edinburgh Book Festival, entitled "The comic as a serious business", Paul Gravett explored the evolution of the graphic novel and the growth of adult interest in comics. Gravett's increasing public profile at Edinburgh consisted of the *Strip Search 2* exhibition, a slide show and a discussion on graphic novels with Grant Morrison and Dave McKean (writer and artist of **Arkham Asylum**).

While comics creators indulge in a little gentle naval-gazing, the commercial world of comics publishing - despite the recession - plunges relentlessly on.

Asterix fix...

Yet another resurgence of activity (the last was in 1989) focused on the diminutive Gaulish warrior is hitting our tv screens and newspapers - and, if publishers of the new Asterix album Hodder & Stoughton have anything to do with it, hitting our pockets as well.

The publisher remains coyly enigmatic about this new Albert Uderzo book, but fans should not submit to early pangs of curiosity: they will be "teased" through a series of naughty little ads in **Private Eye, The Guardian, The Independent, The Observer, Early Times, Look-In, Fast Forward** and **Viz**, as well as a five-day promotion in **The Daily Mirror**. And, no doubt, anyone else who happens to fall under the beady eye of the marketers of "the hottest cartoon character all over Europe".

Manga - still exploding

While Asterix's Hodder & Stoughton boast about their campaign reaching "51 million people", the highest-selling manga in Japan, **Shonen Jump** reaches five million people *per week*. Manga sales as a total consititute 40% of the overall publishing in Japan, and in 1988, the estimated circulation of comic books was 1.75 billion.

The Exploding World - the Image of Contemporary Japan in Comics was an exhibition initially proposed by the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, intended to form part of the 1991 Japan Festival. But when the museum failed to find the necessary funding, Adam Lowe of London's Pomeroy Purdy Gallery undertook to set up the exhibition with the help of selections of art by Kyoichi Tsuzuki.

"There are no assumptions that you can make about Japanese manga," Adam Lowe told **Comics International.** "The industry is so large that it's like trying to make definitive statements about film; it goes through from SF futuristic fantasy, which has universal appeal, to the adult end of the market, where violence and sex are the staple diet, especially the so-called 'juicy' manga, often drawn by women but read almost exclusively by men."

The exhibition, entitled *Recent Manga Publications* is at the Pomeroy Purdy Gallery from October 11th until November 9th, and then moves to the Northern Centre for Contemporary Art in Sunderland, from November 15th to December 20th.

Manga and Viz - in bed?

Joining the exhibition in the north will be an display of original artwork from **Viz**. Apart from being high-selling comics, there would appear to be little connection between the two. But buried deep in the **Viz** creative psyche is an abiding admiration for the populist values of manga, and, it is to be assumed, the willingness to give financial help to the exhibition.

On the theme of John Brown's publications, whatever happened to *Speakeasy*? Readers opening this month's **Blast!** month will have found the insert has been replaced by a section at the back of the magazine called *Graffiti*, which seems like a miniature **Fantazia**.

Speakeasy's fortunes seem to be on the wane. Two years ago, it was a desirable enough publication for John Brown Publishing to buy from Acme Press. But after a brief period as a style magazine it was subsumed into the bosom of **Blast!** and now it has disappeared altogether. Or has it?

Meanwhile...
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Comics distributors in sudden turnaround Neptune out, Pacific bought, Diamond in

Industry Analysis
by Derek G. Skinn

THE COMICS industry has experienced a rapid and unexpected evolution over the last few weeks which could have serious repercussions for both publishers and retailers, and could ultimately affect the amount of material available to the readers.

For a brief period in mid-August, lasting less than a week, there were four competing direct sale distributors of US comicbooks. Now there appear to be only two.

London-based Titan Distributors established the market for bulk air-freighting of US comics into the UK over ten years ago, slowly changing the entire comics shop industry from one reliant on occasional customers for missing back issues. While retailers had once relied 100% on back issue sales, over a few years they began to depend more and more on the regular custom of fans buying new titles, imported weekly, but with a far lower profit margin.

It is now estimated that an average of 80% of a comic shop's turnover is generated by imports, received several months before national newsstand distributors send out their slower sea-freighted stock.

As a result of this rapid growth market, and almost total dependancy on the specialist distributor Titan, Leicester-based Neptune Distributors was established by Geoff Fry to break the monopoly.

Both companies continued to grow and at its peak their combined turnover was assessed at £14 million.

While other smaller operations had launched and floundered in this new industry of tight profit margins, standing between the US publishers (or their main North American distributors) and the UK specialist retail trade, it was not until within the last two months that a third major distributor was established, Pacific Distribution, which — like Neptune — was being supplied by America's largest direct sale distributor Diamond.

Launched in 1982 by "Geppi's Comic World" retail chain proprietor Steve Geppi, Diamond now controls the majority of the US market, which is estimated to be worth over $220 million a year and projected to increase by 10-20% annually.

With 22 distribution bases in North America, Diamond's only major competitor is Wisconsin-based Capital City Distribution Inc, with 17 distribution bases.

Collectively, the two currently control 80% of the total North American direct sale market, which is now viewed by publishers to be their major source of revenue.

Following from the Marvel release of **Spider-Man 1: The Platinum Edition,** in part as a gift for retail input in updating the company's database, there has been considerable industry speculation that Marvel might move into self-distribution, bypassing such companies as Diamond and Capital.

With Marvel domination of the comics publishing market, the effects of such a move, were it to take place, could be disastrous to both rival publishers and existing direct sale distributors.

Distributors would find their turnovers instantly halved and cashflow could be thrown into chaos. Given the effects on retailers of the recession coupled with Marvel's publishing expansions, unsold stocks are multiplying, leaving retailers with little cash to pay distribution bills.

The dependancy on Marvel is such that were it to distribute its own titles, retailers could not afford to miss payments and lose their continuing supply. This would mean payments to independent distributors for other publishers' titles would be come a second priority.

Speculating further, it is not difficult to imagine a future where, similar to its marketing of outside companies product licencing, Marvel could end up distributing other publishers titles and further increasing its market share.

To this end, in conjunction with the continuing growth

and competition between Diamond and Capital, Britain could be seen to be a lucrative market.

While its total market represents possibly only 10% of the direct sale total, it is strongly established and a perfect base for moving into Europe with product in 1992.

Diamond's Steve Geppi told **Comics International**, "Basically, Diamond was the supplier of Neptune Comic Distributors for the last few years, ever since we took over Bud Plant's operation in the States.

"We have long set our sights on the UK", he continued. "But given the fact that Neptune was a sub-distributor of ours we did not want to compete with them directly, and, until the situation developed the way it did, there was no reason to. But now, given the fact that they're winding down, Diamond is now establishing its long looked-forward to UK warehouse."

NEPTUNE

"In the past few months, Neptune has had some difficulties so I called Geoff Fry and we deemed it prudent at this time to discontinue shipping American comics to Neptune. Geoff agreed that it was best he discontinued carrying American comics at this point.

"And as such," he continued, "Out of concern for his accounts, he decided that the best thing to do was to turn his accounts over to Diamond, which had ordered the books for his customers. As he had the breakdowns on retail orders, so they wouldn't have interrupted delivery, he turned that information over to us."

Countering industry rumours, Geppi added, "In no way has Diamond bought Neptune Distributors. All we're really doing is taking jurisdiction over the books that we'd already ordered that we no longer had a sub-distributor for.

"For now, with their approval, we'll be selling the books direct to retailers as Diamond (UK) Ltd.", he concluded.

In a letter to customers, dated August 14, Neptune's managing director Geoff Fry explained the supply change to Diamond, stating "The reason for this decision is to enable us to concentrate on our other activities, in particular publishing."

He added, "We shall continue to ship Apocalypse and Trident products and certain other UK products include DC distribs."

PACIFIC

However, ex-Pacific Records' financial director Michael Alculumbre had officially launched his new company, Pacific Distribution, in July, with American comics being supplied by Diamond. If Diamond was to become a direct supplier to UK retailers, how could it also supply a potential competitor, Pacific? Steve Geppi answered, "We're optimistic that we'll be able to do something together. Given that it would be a difficult situation for them to compete with their own supplier, Michael (Alculumbre) has indicated his willingness to work something out with Diamond."

Following Geppi's comments, Alculumbre confirmed two days later that Diamond had bought his company, complete with all assets and liabilities, and that Diamond would commence shipping, following a brief use of Neptune's base, out of Pacific's Heathrow warehouse.

In answer to industry speculation of a financial link existing between Pacific and Stateside Comics PLC, Michael Alculumbre told **Comics International**, "We have no connection with Stateside whatsoever. When we first looked at comics distribution, Stateside agreed to be the guinea pig, an initial customer we could supply to iron out any distribution problems.

"To that end," he continued, "Stateside allowed me to take their Import Manager, Martin Shipp, on to Pacific's staff.

"Martin had been the main liaison between the two companies and had been looking for a wider role in the industry," he concluded.

TITAN

For Titan Distributors, August 1991 had proven the most unsettling of months, with myriad conflicting reports circulating.

Comics International asked Steve Geppi if Titan's use of his Diamond trucking for books out of World Color, Sparta, created any problems now that he would be in direct competition with them.

"We have a very good working relationship with Titan," he replied. I know this is kind of an unusual circumstance when there will soon be both Titan and Diamond as distributors represented in the UK. But Diamond is not known for predatorial practices. We don't call other distributors' accounts up and try to persuade them. We feel the accounts will decide for themselves, based on who gives the best service.

"We're not going to pressure retailers. We appreciate whatever business they offer to us, but we'd like to earn their business," he added. "If we get it, we feel like we've earned it, and if we don't deserve it, we shouldn't have it. I've already had a very pleasant conversation with Mike Lake (managing director of Titan Distributors), he has been very aware on an on-going basis of my coming to the UK, and he was one of the first people I told because of our friendship. There are probably things we can do together on other levels that will help the market. We're concerned for things of that nature."

THE FUTURE

Sharing that concern, Titan's Mike Lake stated, "Though the proprietor of our incoming competitor enjoys an excellent reputation in the States, I wonder whether the small and inexperienced team now starting the depot in London will be capable of giving the attention, advice and back-up stock that will be necessary."

He concluded by saying, "Steve Geppi and I are currently "comparing notes" on problems, and I have to say that it's a pleasant change to have another distributor around who we can work with!"

The Capital Connection

WHILE Diamond and Titan are set to compete over local UK retailers, Capital City Distribution continues to expand its business into Europe by exporting direct to retailers from America.

The company's co-owner Milton Griepp told **Comics International**, "Capital City has been the industry leader in terms of international shipments out of the States for a number of years. We have a very successful international business, including the UK and Europe, which we expect will continue to grow."

On Diamond's establishing of a UK base, he commented, "Diamond's move into the UK is not unexpected and I think they felt they needed a greater presence there than they had in the past."

While acknowledging Diamond's greater overall size, Griepp added, "Their growth over the last three or four years has been through acquisition. Ours has been an internally generated growth, resulting in the size of the difference in terms of percentage share having narrowed."

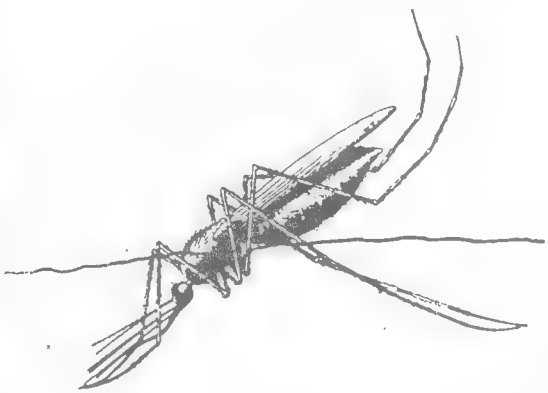
On creating his own overseas base, Griepp stated that Capital City had explored the possibility in considerable detail, but added that no final decision had yet been made. "Having a European base doesn't necessarily imply having a better service. The advantage we have is that our costs of transportation can be competitive despite the smaller shipments and the time can be quicker."

Given that customer loyalty is to the product and not the shop, and that the key to a successful shop is to receive the new titles first, Griepp continued, "Shipping direct means less handling. The books go straight from the printer to be packed on an individual basis. Then to an airport to be flown straight to an airport near that customer where they can clear it and get their hands straight on it.

"That's faster than bulk shipping, clearing customs and then being packed for the customer and shipped on." He concluded, "It cuts out a step at the handling stage."

So, with two major UK-based distributors and one major US-based competitor, and a UKCAC trade show where gifts and inducements are being offered, retailers will find they are faced with three alternatives.

But the key factors will remain the same as ever; speed, efficiency and price.



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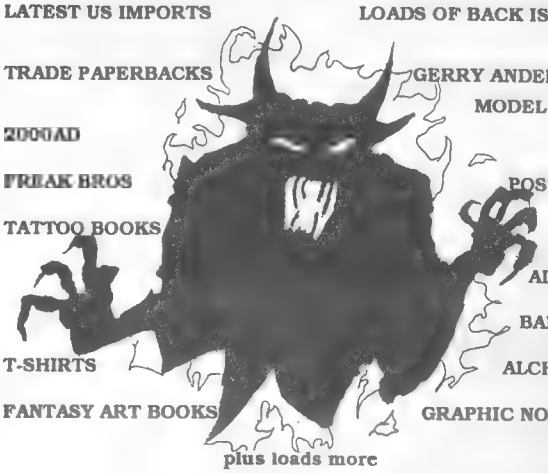

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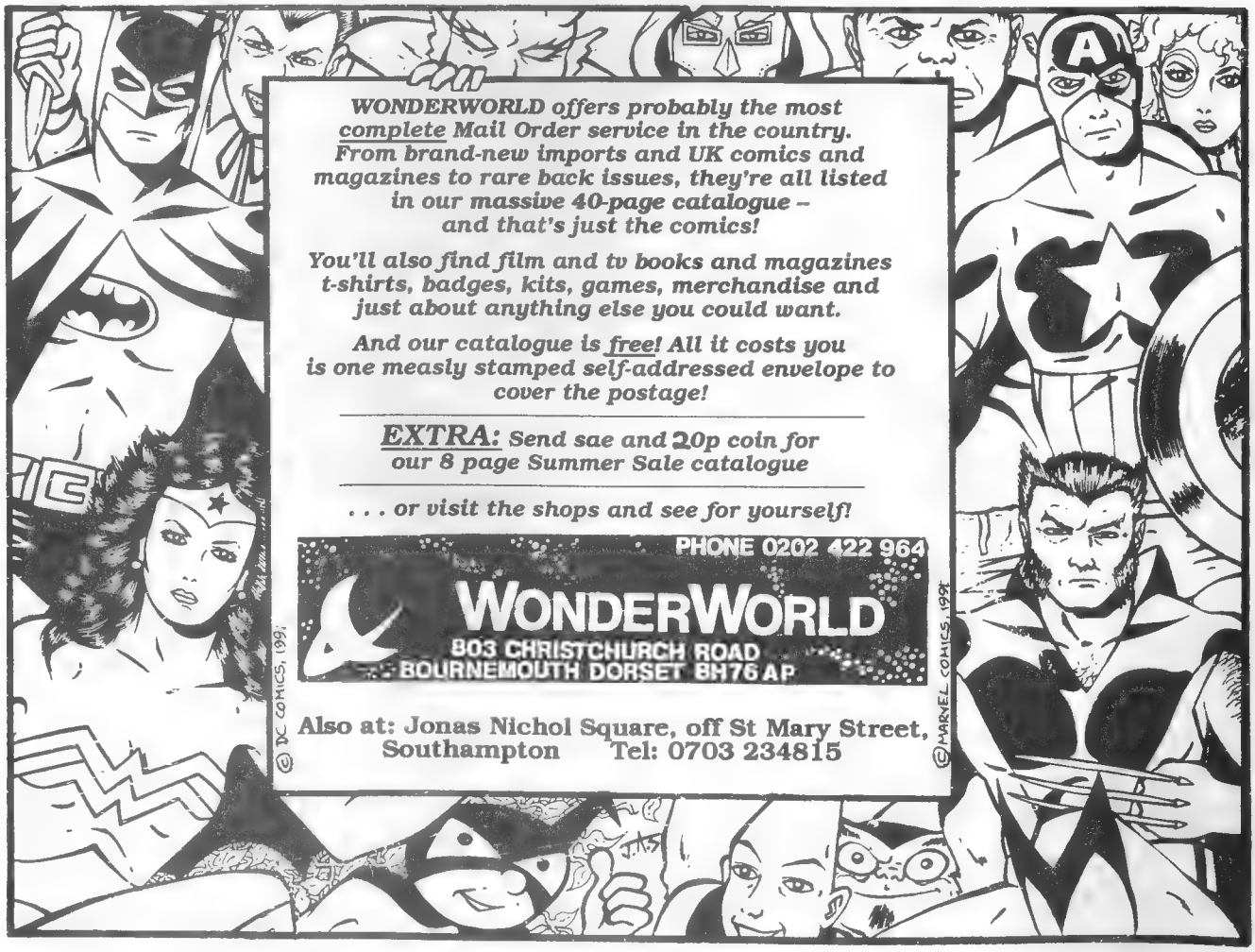

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1 & 2 + 3 = Writer & penciller + inker
***sqbd** = perfect bound; squared spine; without staples*
***RO** = Ronalds print, good white paper*
***b&w** = black & white content*
***hbk** = hardback (book) edition*
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***Xpg** = X number of interior pages*
***V** = violence; **N** = nudity; **S** = sex*

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<> **Justice League International**

Quarterly 5 (Waid, Loebs, Dooley, Cavalieri, McKone, Duursema, Smith, Parobeck, Pepoy, Templeton) Super-heroes under universal attack from one of their oldest enemies. Plus three new back-ups: 'Fire and Ice', 'The Global Guardians' and 'General Glory'. 80pg $2.95

<> **Ragman 3** (of 8; Giffen & Fleming + Broderick) Rory gleans vital information about his family's origins in Nazi-occupied Warsaw. $1.50

<> **Shade, the Changing Man 18** (Milligan & Pennington) In this conclusion to the 'American Scream' storyline Shade returns to his old teacher in a final, destructive encounter. $1.75

<> **Star Trek 26** (Weinstein & Purcell + Starr) Kirk finds himself suddenly married and in possession of title deeds to land when the Enterprise is assigned to Pilkor 3. $1.75

<> **Superman: The Man of Steel 6** (L. Simonson & Bogdanove + Swann + Janke) 'Blackout', part 3: Still lost and forgetful Superman and Mr Z discover Dinosaur Island - while in Metropolis looting breaks out. Continues in **Superman** 62. $1.00

<> **The Web 4** (Impact Comics; Strazewski & Artis + Wray) 'The Problem'; Web Agent Jump fights to the finish in a grudge match with the UFO. $1.00

<> **Wonder Woman 61** (War of the Gods crossover; Perez & Thompson + Tanghal) World heroes gather for the final assault on would-be doom bringer Circe. $1.00

SHIPPING OCTOBER 24TH

<> **Aquaman 1** (M. McLaughlin & Hooper + Dvorak) Renewed monthly format, with Poseidon is under attack from a surface city, while Aquaman tries to escape his past by performing superheroics. Cameos from J'Onn, J'Onzz and Blue Beetle. $1.00

<> **Batman 472**. (Milligan & Breyfogle) 'The Idiot Root' (part 1 of 4) sees a crossover between **Batman** and **Detective Comics** with Batman pursuing a psychopath to Rio and encountering the supernatural Idiot, who eats minds. $1.00

<> **The Demon 18** (Grant & Semeiks + Smith) Jason Blood and the Demon Etrigan are fleeing the Wotan and the Wild Hunt in the Beyond Region. $1.50

<> **Hellblazer 48** (Ennis & Simpson) 'Love Kills': Constantine is caught in the middle when the spirits of a haunted pub gather to seek vengeance. Mature readers. $1.75

<> **The Jaguar 5** (Impact Comics; Messner-Loebs & D. Williams + Marzan Jr.) Web scientists are attacked by Void, the living Black Hole. $1.00

<> **Justice League America 57** (Giffen & DeMatteis + Wozniak + Patterson) 'Breakdowns', part 9: Lobo tracks Despero down to Earth, with the ensuing destruction of the JLA Embassy. $1.00

<> **Legion of Super-Heroes 25** (Gordon & Giffen + T. & H. Bierbaum, Abell + Vancata)Devlin O'Ryan allies himself with the Legion when running from the Dominion and Earthgov. $1.75

<> **The New Titans 82** (Wolfman & Grummet + Vey) Secrets of the Wildebeest Society are revealed which prove a shock to the Titans. Deluxe format. $1.75

<> **Outlaws 4** (of 8; Friedman & McDonell) Hood and men destroy the king's garrison and factory while Hellion faces the Lord Conductor. Deluxe format. 32pg $1.95

<> **Sandman 33** (Gaiman & McManus) 'The Doll's House' sees Barbie returning to the Land. Mature readers. $1.50

<> **Sgt. Rock 19** 'The Night Batman Sold His Soul' (Haney & Aparo) sees Batman teaming up with Rock in a Nazi hunt; 'Face the Devil' (Kanigher & Heath) spooks Easy Company in a graveyard tale. 48pg $2.00

<> **Superman 62** (Jurgens & Breeding) 'Blackout', part 4: Lois and Professor Hamilton rescue Superman and Mr Z from Dinosaur Island. Continues from **Superman: The Man of Steel 6** and into **Adventures of Superman** 485. $1.00

SHIPPING OCTOBER 31ST

<> **Adventures of Superman 485** (Ordway & Grummet + Hazelwood) 'Blackout', part 4: Conclusion of this storyline sees Lois trying to restore Superman's memory with a kiss... she then returns to Metropolis, where Dubbilex tries to cure Superman's amnesia. $1.00

<> **Animal Man 42** (T. Veitch & Dillon) Buck Samson and his cadre from S.T.A.R. Labs unleashes artificial killers on Buddy Baker's family. $1.75

<> **Black Canary 2** (of 4; Byam & Von Eeden + Giordano) When Gan pickets a crackhouse Black Canary is forced to rescue him. $1.75

<> **The Brave and the Bold 1** (of 6; Baron & Pensa) Featuring Green Arrow, Butcher, Black Canary and the Question in this mini-series reviving the popular DC team-up title. $1.75

<> **Clash 1** (of 4; T. Veitch & Adam Kubert) Playboy adventurer turns superhero when he discovers the key to mysterious powers. Prestige format. 48pg $4.95

<> **Green Lantern 19** (G. Jones & Bright + Broderick, Staton, Nodell, Tanghal + Patterson) Double-sized 50th anniversary issue, with the visitation of Alan Scott leading to the discovery of the origin of the first Green Lantern. $1.75

<> **Legend of the Shield 6** (Impact comics; Miehm & Waid + Miehm) Summit City's street gang, the Jewels, challenge the Shield; plus the secret origin of the Shield is revealed. $1.00

<> **L.E.G.I.O.N '91 34** (Grant & Kitson + Pennington) Lobo tracks the Ice Man to his lair, but the booby-traps make it harder than usual to tear the creep's head off. Vril Dox, meanwhile, is deeply in love with the mysterious IgUnea. $1.50

<> **Robin II: The Joker's Wild 1** (of 4; Dixon & Lyle + Smith)

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Following up last year's mini-series, Batman is incommunicado and the Joker springs up in Gotham with his usual plans to plunge the city into apocalyptic chaos. Only Robin can stop him. The issue is available in "Direct" and "Newsstand" editions, with the direct copies having a hologram cover. $1.00

<> **Robin II: The Joker's Wild Collector's Set 1** Newstand edition and all four of the direct, plus a separate hologram duplicate of the cover, bagged set. $10.00

<> **Robin II: The Joker's Wild Deluxe Complete Set #1 - 4** All fourteen variants of issues 1 - 4, all four holograms, two acid-free backing-boards with new hologram and slipcase. A limited set, numbered 1 - 25,000. $30.00

<> **Spelljammer Comics 16** (Blaustein & Reddington + Panosian) Kirstig returns to her homeworld to find that she's rejected by her own race: persecution follows, with her fate finally decided by her arch-rival, Meredith. $1.75

<> **Starman 41** (Strazewski & Calimee Richardson) Starman deals with Maaldor, the extradimensional menace. $1.00

<> **Star Trek: The Next Generation 26** (Freidman & Krause + Marcos) Worf's family are reunited while the Enterprise finds unexpected danger in the search for Okona. $1.75

<> **Swamp Thing 114** (N.A.Collins & Mandrake + DeMulder) Swamp Thing unwillingly accepts the aid of John Constantine when ghost pirates leave a trail of slaughter in their journey across the Louisiana bayou. Mature readers. $1.75

SHIPPING NOVEMBER 7TH

<> **Action Comics 672** (Stern & McLeod + Rodier) Superman and Lex Luthor II meet for the first time when Luthor offers to mediate in a strike at the Daily Planet. $1.00

<> **Advanced Dungeons and Dragons 36** (Mishkin & Duursema + Magyar) In the conclusion to 'Rights and Wrongs' Kyriani is rescued from Strumferral, despite Conner's best attempts to foil the attempt. $1.75

<> **Armageddon: The Alien Agenda 2** (of 4; J. Peterson & Nasser) Monarch continues his search through time for the detonation device which could destroy the solar system; this issue: Nero's Rome. $1.00

<> **Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 25** (Chaykin & Kane) 'Flyer', part 2 of 3: Batman is captured by the head of the Goliath suit project and manipulated into helping test their flying combat armor. Deluxe format. $1.75

<> **The Comet 6** (Impact Comics; Lyle & Waid + Lyle + Hanna) The Comet encounters an ambiguous new hero from the Impact line, The Hangman. $1.00

<> **Detective Comics 639** (Milligan & Aparo + M. DeCarlo) 'The Idiot Root', part 2: Batman plunges into the Amazonian rainforest where a ruined temple holds the secret of the mind-eating Idiot. Continued from **Batman** 472 and into **Batman** 473. $1.00

<> **Doctor Fate 35** (Messner-Loebs & Eaton + Gross) Kent Nelson returns to NY to find his neighborhood suffering from the presence of Fate. $1.75

<> **Doom Patrol 50** (Morrison & Case, Hewlett + R. Hughes) 50th issue stand-off between Doom Patrol and the Brotherhood of Dada. In addition to the 30-page lead story there is a portfolio section by Case, Hewlett, Hughes, Bisley, Bolland, Fegredo and Kane with text by Grant Morrison. $2.50

<> **The Fly 5** (Impact Comics; Strazewski & Parobeck + Fricke) Stand-off between the Fly and Arachnus, the half-man, half robot spider crime lord, with the lives of the citizenry at stake. $1.00

<> **Green Arrow 55** (Grell & Hoberg + Nyberg) Green Arrow follows the trail of a 15-year series of murders, tying in with the landmark mini-series 'Green Arrow: The Longbow Hunters'. $1.50

<> **Justice League Europe 33** (Giffen & G. Jones + Robertson + J. Beatty) 'Breakdowns', part 10: Guy Gardner vs Despero vs. JLI vs. Lobo vs. Despero. $1.00

<> **The Shadow Strikes! 26** (G.Jones & Whigham + Fernandez) The Shadow and his agents track Shiwan Khan back to China. Deluxe format. $2.00

<> **Suicide Squad 60** (Ostrander & Yale + Isherwood + Campanella) Batman, Superman and Aquaman team up to go into combat with the Suicide Squad and try to solve the mystery of the Atom. Guesting: terrorist Jihad and the the Israeli metahumans, the Hayoth. $1.25

DRAWN & QUARTERLY

<> **Dirty Plotte 4** (Doucet) 'Dirty Plotte vs. Super Clean Plotte' and chapter 4 of 'Monkey of the Living Dead'. Mature readers. $2.50

<> **Yummy Fur 26** (Brown) Chester Brown's school stories and another Bible interpretation. 24pg $2.50

ECLIPSE

<> **Dinosaurs Attack! 2** (Geran & Freeman + Norem) Havoc wreaked as the dinosaurs eat humans and animals alike and accidental fusings of man and dinosaur in the aftermath to the Timescan experiment. $3.50

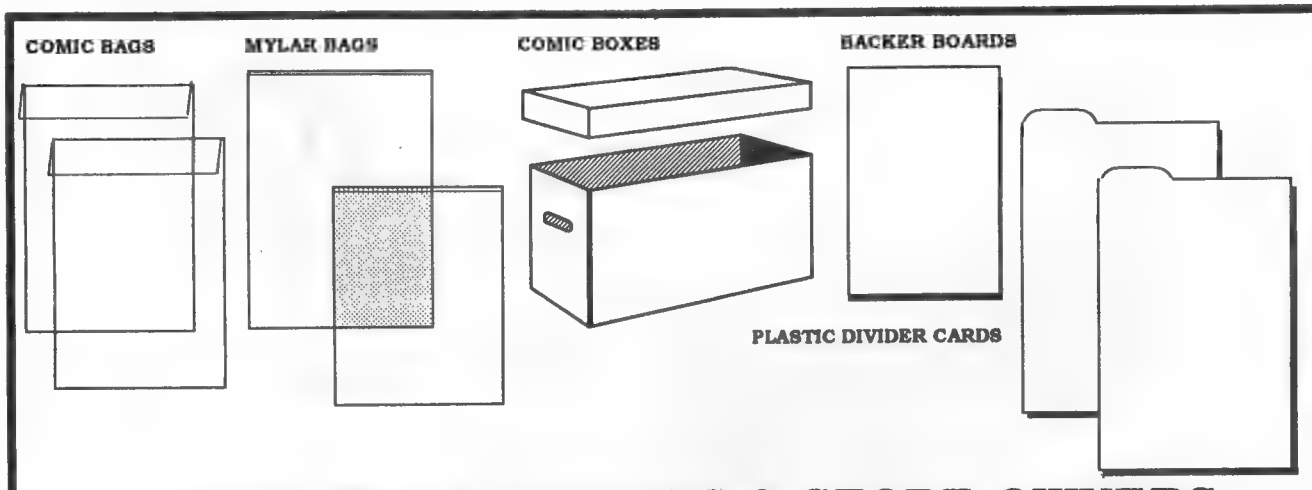
EPIC / MARVEL

<> **Captain Confederacy 2** (of 4; Shetterly & Stone) The scenario is that the South ceded from the Union: Captain Confederacy and Kid Dixie meet the superhero representatives; computer-aided artwork. $1.95

<> **Groo the Wanderer 84** (Aragones & Evanier) Concluding the 'Legend of Thalis' four-part storyline. Thalis fights to overthrow Queen Tropa, who has Groo by her side. $1.00

<> **Jihad 1** (of 2; Chichester & Johnson) Nightbreed vs. Cenobite, with the latter planning to cleanse Hell of the former. Mature readers. $4.50

<> **Metropol 10** "Rotting Metal, Rusting Flesh" (McKeever) The



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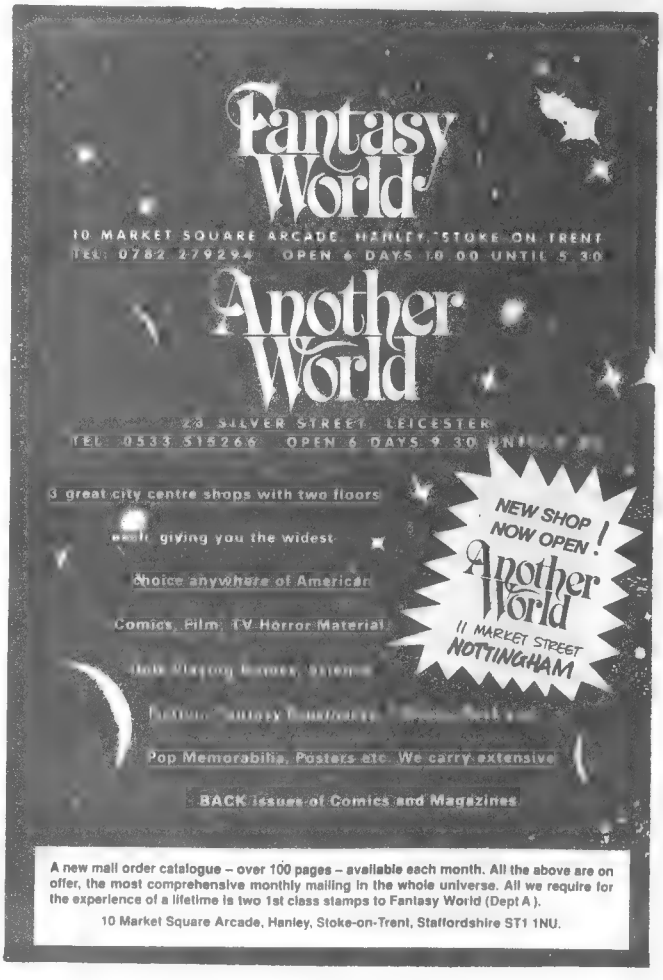
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Angels prepare for a stand-off with the Demons; "Playing With Coal" part 2 (of 3; McKeever & Mignola) Mad and dead Eddie Current finds the ominous walled city of Metropol.
<> **Tomb of Dracula 2** (of 4; Wolfman & Colan + Williamson) Dracula arrives in Washington DC to develop a new power base in the '90s. Mature readers. $4.95
<> **Weaveworld 1** (of 3; Saltzgaber & Manley + Villagran) Adptn of Clive Barker novel. $4.95

FANTACO

<> **Night of the Living Dead: Prelude** (Skulan & Kastro) $1.50

FANTAGRAPHICS

<> **Collier's 1** (Collier) **Drawn & Quarterly, The Comics Journal** and **Graphic Story Monthly** artist in his first full-length comic. Mature readers. b&w $2.75
<> **Love & Rockets 37** (Hernandez Brothers) Reprint. Mature readers. b&w $2.75
<> **Perramus: Escape From the Past 1** (Breccia & Sasturain) Loose retelling of Agentina's "Dirty War", with the authenticity of the creators having lived through the period concerned. Mature readers. b&w 44pg $3.50
<> **Real Stuff 4** (Hernandez & Eichhorn, Williams, Zingarelli) Rare guesting by Jaime Hernandez $2.25
<> **Sap Tunes 1** (Davis & Kongsle) Imagine Moliere's The Misanthrope in a rock'n'roll setting...Mature readers. b&w $2.25

HARVEY

<> **Casper & Friends 3** $1.00
<> **Casper Digest 3** $1.75
<> **Little Dracula** $1.25
<> **Nine Lives of Felix the Cat 3** $1.25
<> **Richie Rich Big Bucks 6** 1.75
<> **Richie Rich Digest 33** $1.75
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<> **Tom & Jerry & Friends 2** $1.25
<> **Woody Woodpecker & Friends 2** $1.25

JADEMAN COMICS

<> **Blood Sword 40** $1.95
<> **Blood Sword Dynasty 27** $1.25
<> **Drunken Fist 40** $1.95
<> **Force of Buddha's Palm 40** $1.95
<> **Iron Marshal 17** $1.75
<> **Oriental Heroes 40** $1.95

KITCHEN SINK

<> **Baseball Comics 1** (Feiffer & Eisner + Blaisdell + Grandanetti) $3.95
<> **Spirit 84** (Eisner) Reprint of the 1950s classics. b&w $2.00

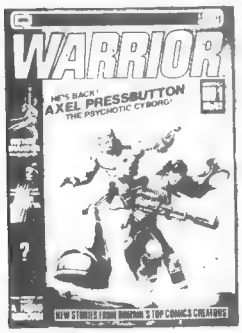
MARVEL COMICS

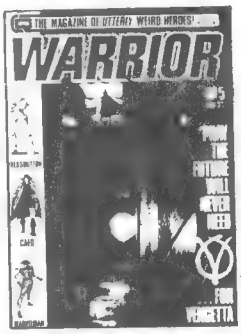
SHIPPING OCTOBER 3RD

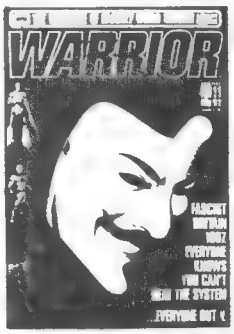
<> **Avengers West Coast 77** (R. Thomas & Ryan + Dzon) The "Infamous Monsters of Filmland" are still attempting to steal the souls of the Avengers West Coast, with Satannish and the Night Shift in the second part of the 4-part story. $1.00
<> **Captain America 395** (Gruenwald & Lim + Bulandi) 'Heart of the Viper' part 2 of 4: Two of Cap's most popular enemies - Red Skull and Crossbones feature + back-up with Bad Girls Inc $1.00
<> **Daredevil 299** (Chichester & Weeks + Williamson) 'Fall of the Kingpin' storyline, with the build-up to the final confrontation between Daredevil and the Kingpin. $1.00
<> **Darkhawk 10** (Fingeroth & Manley + Villagran) Featuring a new costume-clad and super-powered Tombstone. $1.00
<> **Excalibur 45** (Davis & Farmer) The Technet are united to protect the Druid Chalice while Captain Britain faces Saturnye. $1.75
<> **Legion of the Night 2** (of 2; Gerber & Portacio + Panosian) The Legion continues its quest to prevent Fin Fang Foom's dreams of oblivion from becoming reality $4.95
<> **Marvel Comics Presents 90** 'Wolverine' (part 6 of 8; David & Keith) While Tyger Tiger and General Coy discuss the fate of Madripoor's underworld, Cyber dupes them both; 'The Beast' (part 6 of 8; Lobdell & Lee + Dzon) The mysery of the Were-borgs is revealed; 'Nightmare - Fangu Lives' (Buccellato); 'Ghost Rider and Cable' (part 1 of 8; Mackie & Yap) First of 8-part storyline. $1.25
<> **NFL Superpro 3** (Nicieza & Delbo + DeCarlo) Introduction of new character Instant Replay: meanwhile Superpro finds hard to fight an enemy who can time-travel at will. $1.00
<> **Punisher 56** (Part 4 of 7; Baron & Haynes + Palmiotti) Imprisoned on Ryker Island, the Punisher battles for his life with Gregario and Jigsaw. $1.00
<> **The Pirates of Dark Waters 2** (of 6; Zimmerman & Zick + Gil) Adaptation of hit Hanna Barbera sword and scorcery animated series. $1.00
<> **She-Hulk 34** (Byrne & Williams) Weezi and Jen return to NYC to find DA Tower trying to prosecute a corpse. $1.50
<> **Uncanny X-Men 283** (J. Lee & Byrne + Portacio + Thibert) While answering an SOS from the USSR, the X-Men make a disturbing find in a remote cavern. $1.00
<> **Web of Spider-Man 83** (Busiek & Marinan + Hudson) Spider-Man confronts a new enemy with an AIM supersuit; he also appears in this month's **Moon Knight 33**, the repercussions of which will effect future issues of this comic. $1.00

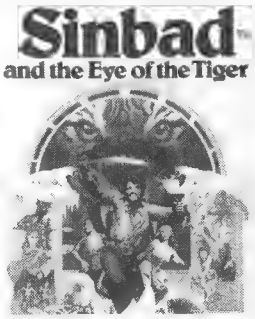
SHIPPING OCTOBER 10TH

<> **Alf 48** (Gallagher & Manak + Severin) Part 2 of 4, with Alf continuing with his search for a way to get to his home world. $1.00
<> **Alpha Flight 103** (Lobdell & Morgan + Ivy) Alpha Flight struggles to free a South American country from Diablo's machinations, with US Agent guesting. $1.50
<> **Amazing Spider-Man 355** (Milgrom & Bagley + Emberlin) Part 3 of 'Round Robin' features guests Darkhawk, Punisher, Moon Knight and Nova. $1.00
<> **Barbie 12** (Trusian & Slate + Brock, Brigman + Mushynsky) Barbie meets up with a monkey bandit. $1.00
<> **The Destroyer: Terror 1** (of 4; Murphy & Cochran + Harris +









WARRIOR ••• ••• BACK ISSUES ••• •••HOUSE OF HAMMER

1 ("Marvelman" by Alan Moore/Garry Leach; "Shandor" by Steve Moore + John Bolton, "Spiral Path" by Steve Parkhouse; "V for Vendetta" by Alan Moore + David Lloyd; "Pressbutton" by Steve Moore + Steve Dillon; "Prester John" by Steve Moore & John Bolton; Dave Gibbons strip & Marvelman feature) **£1.50**

2 (as issue 1 except Gibbons replaced by "Madman" by Paul Neary) **£1.25**

3 (Alan Moore, Garry Leach, Steve Moore, Steve Parkhouse, John Bolton, Brian Bolland, Paul Neary) **£1.00**

4 ("Marvelman" by Alan Moore with Paul Neary; Alan Davis & Steve Dillon art; David Lloyd's "Golden Amazon"; plus regulars "V for Vendetta"; "Spiral Path"; "Madman";and "Shandor" with David Jackson artwork; "Pressbutton" origin) **£1.00**

5 (Alan Moore, Garry Leach, Alan Davis, Paul Neary, Steve Moore, Steve Dillon, Steve Parkhouse, Paul Neary) **£1.00**

6 (as issue 5 contributors plus Dave Gibbons) **£1.00**

7 (regulars, as issue 6, final "Madman" — Mick Austin art) **£1.00**

8 (regular strips, as issue 5, plus Hunt Emerson strip) **£1.00**

9 (regulars + "Warpsmith" by Alan Moore & Garry Leach) **£1.00**

10 (regulars + "Warpsmith" by Alan Moore & Garry Leach) **£1.00**

11 (regulars plus "Prester John" Pt 2 by S Moore & John Stokes) **£1.00**

12 (last "Spiral Path"; "Young Marvelman" by Alan Moore & John Ridgway; "BoJeffries" by Alan Moore & Steve Parkhouse; the "V for Vendetta" theme by A Moore & D Lloyd; "Prester John" end) **£1.00**

13 ("Zirk" by S Moore & Garry Leach; "V for Vendetta" by Alan Moore & David Lloyd; "Shandor" by S Moore & David Jackson; "Marvelman" by A Moore & A Davis; SF strip by Parkhouse/Ridgway) **£1.00**

14 ("Twilight World" part 1 of 4 by S Moore & Jim Baikie; "Ektryn" by S Moore & Cam Kennedy; "Shandor"; "V for Vendetta"; "Marvelman" by regulars) **£1.00**

15 ("Marvelman"; "V"; "Shandor"; "Twilight World"; "Pressbutton" by regulars + Steve Moore feature) **£1.00**

16 ("Marvelman"; "V"; "Shandor"; "Twilight World" by regulars + Alez Skinn interview on creating comics) **£1.00**

17 ("Marvelman Family" by A Moore & John Ridgway; "V"; "Twilight World" conclusion; "Shandor" by regulars + Alan Moore on creating "V for Vendetta") **£1.00**

18 ("Marvelman"; "V"; "Shandor"; Steve Parkhouse strip; Martin Asbury strip + Garry Leach interview on drawing comics) **£1.00**

19, 20, 21 Rare issues, none available

22 ("V for Vendetta" by A Moore & D Lloyd; "Big Ben" by Skinn & William Simpson; "Bogey" by Segura & Sanchez; "Liberators" by Skinn & John Ridgway; Frank Bellamy interview) **£1.00**

23 ("V for Vendetta" by A Moore & D Lloyd; "Shandor" by Steve Moore and John Ridway; "Bogey" by Segura & Sanchez"; "Big Ben" by Skinn & Simpson; Brian Bolland interview. **£1.00**

24 ("Pressbutton" by Steve Moore & Alan Davis; ""Zirk" by Steve Moore & Garry Leach; "Big Ben" by Skinn & Simpson; "Shandor" by Steve Moore & John Ridgway; "V for Vendetta" by Alan Moore & David Lloyd; John Bolton interview.) **£1.00**

25 (68 pages, "Big Ben", "V for Vendetta"; "Ektryn" by Steve Moore & Cam Kennedy; "Pressbutton", "Bogey"; "Shandor" etc) **£1.25**

26 (final issue; "Zirk" by Leach; "V for Vendetta"; "Big Ben"; "The Liberators" by Grant Morrison & John Ridgway; "Bogey", etc) **£1.25**

»***MARVELMAN SPECIAL*** *(1984; 1950s Marvelman reprints + Alan Moore & Alan Davis framing sequence, story ties in with* ***Warrior*** *issue 11; "Big Ben" by Ian Gibson)* **£1.00**

1 ("Dracula" by Skinn & Neary, "Kronos" by S Moore & Ian Gibson + Angus McKie strip) **£1.50**

2 (very rare, "Curse of Frankenstein" by Cuyas, "Kronos" by Gibson + Brian Lewis strip & cover) **£5.00**

3 (very rare, "Frankenstein Pt 2" by Cuyas; Ian Gibson & Trev Goring comic strips) **£5.50**

4 (very rare, "Seven Golden Vampires" by Brian Lewis + John Bolton's first comics strip) **£9.50**

5 (very rare, "Moon Zero Two" by Paul Neary + Martin (Garth) Asbury comic strip, Lewis cover) **£8.50**

6 (very rare, "Dracula, Prince of Darkness" by Donne Avenell and John Bolton + Brian Lewis strip & cover art)

7 ("Twins of Evil" by Blas Gallego + Dave Gibbons strip) **£1.50**

8 (intro "Shandor" by S Moore & J Bolton + "Quatermass Xperiment by Brian Lewis, and Joe Colquhoun strip) **£1.50**

9 ("Quatermass" Part 2 by Lewis + Jim Baikie strip) **£1.50**

10 ("Curse of the Werewolf" strip by S Moore & J Bolton) **£1.50**

11 ("The Gorgon" by Trev Goring & Cuyas + Brian Lewis strip) **£1.50**

12 ("Gorgon" conclusion by Cuyas, Steve Parkhousse strip) **£1.50**

13 ("Plague of the Zombies" by Brian Bolland & Trev Goring + Brian Lewis strip and cover art) **£1.50**

14 ("One Million Years BC" strip by John Bolton) **£1.50**

15 ("The Mummy's Shroud" strip by David Jackson + Dave Gibbons) **£1.50**

16 ("Shandor" by Steve Moore & John Bolton, Patrick Wright strip) **£1.50**

17 ("Vampire Circus" by Brian Bolland, Goudenzi strip) Rare issue **£2.25**

18 (Rare issue, "Dracula, Frankenstein & The Werewolf" strip by Neal Adams & Dick Giordano, plus Pino strip) **£3.50**

19 ("The Reptile" by Brian Lewis + Steve Parkhouse strip) **£1.50**

20 ("Captain Kronos" by Steve Parkhouse) **£1.00**

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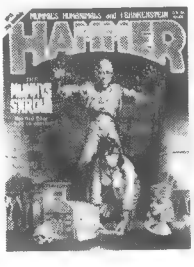

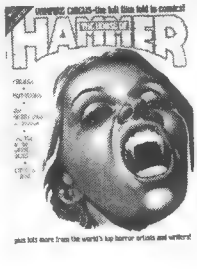

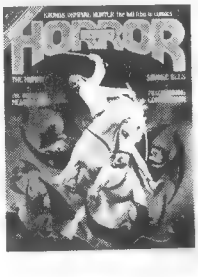

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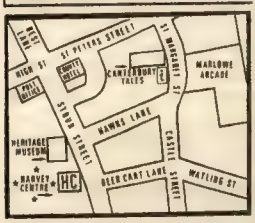

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<> **Sleepwalker 7** (Infinity Gauntlet crossover; Budiansky & Blevins) With Rick Sheridan dead, Sleepwalker, although on the point of dying, is forced to fight the Chain Gang. $1.00

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<> **Wolverine 49** (Hama & Silvestri + Green) Wolverine is still delving in his past and questioning his relationship with Sabretooth. $1.75

<> **Wonder Man 4** (G.Jones & Johnson + Harps) Introducing Splice, an assassin from the film industry, and any amount of gags about ending up on the cutting-room floor. $1.00

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<> **Avengers 342** (Harras & Levins + Palmer) Crystal and Sersi, while out for a night on the town, encounter an unexpected enemy. $1.00

<> **Conan the Barbarian 251** (R. Thomas & Docherty + Chan) In a dream-state Conan visits his beleagured homeland, Cimmeria. $1.00

<> **Double Dragon 6** (of 6; McDuffie & Butler + Vancata) The dragons have discovered their past, and consequently are ready to take down Nightfall. $1.00

<> **Excalibur 46** (Davis & Farmer) Meggan and Rachel deal with demons from Meggan's past. $1.75

<> **Guardians of the Galaxy 19** (Valentino & Montano) Introducing new member Talon. $1.00

<> **G.I. Joe 119** (Trimpe) Cobra Commander's army of android dopplegangers aim to infiltrate the globe. $1.00

<> **Incredible Hulk 388** (David & Keown + Farmer) Focusing on the issue of AIDS, with Speed Freak hired by a mob boss to murder the man who's given his son aids. $1.00

<> **Infinity Gauntlet 6** (Starlin & Lim + Rubenstein) In this concluding issue Nebula possesses the gauntlet and Thanos is her prisoner, leaving Warlock, Silver Surfer and Dr. Strange to save the universe. $2.50

<> **Marvel Age 107** Reports on **The Punisher**, Captain America and **Hulk: Future Days**, with a preview of **Dreadlands**. Clive Barker interview to celebrate Halloween, plus the usual Stan Lee, Fred Hembeck and Mark Gruenwald columns. $1.00

<> **Marvel Comics Presents 91 Wolverine**, part 7 (of 8; David & Keith) Wolverine goes the distance with Cyber; **The Beast**, part 7 (of 8; Lobdell & Lee) The world symposium on mutant research is ambushed; **Antman** (Plunkett); **Ghost Rider and Cable**, part 2 (of 8; Mackie & Yap) The twosome travel underground to rescue a hostage from the Grateful Undead. $1.25

<> **Marvel Tales 256** (Grant) Featuring the original Ghost Rider: Moon Dark has stolen Johnny Blaze's soul, and Spider-Man realises he's next on the list. $1.00

<> **Punisher 57** (Baron & Haynes + Palmiotti) The Punisher escapes, despite being critically injured, from Ryker's Island. $1.00

<> **Robocop 22** (Furman & Sullivan) 'Beyond the Law', part 2 of 3. Robocop fights for his life on a South American island. $1.50

<> **SHIELD 30** (Chichester & Stiner + Hudson) Featuring new perp. Leviathan, who has stolen the Infinity Formula that keeps Nick Fury alive. $1.50

<> **Spider-Man 17** (Nocenti & Leonardi + Austin) The death of Spider-Man - not, apparently, a cheap trick, although he does have to battle with Thanos first. $1.75

<> **What If? 32** (Caragonne & Ramos) 'What If The Phoenix Had Not Died?" Magneto plans to upset Scott and Phoenix's marriage, while Jean Grey is still in suspended animation at the bottom of the bay. $1.25

<> **X-Factor 73** (David & Stroman + Milgrom) Washington DC's streets are chaotic with mobs running rampant. $1.00

<> **X-Men 3** (Byrne & Lee + Williams) First issue of John Byrne's return to the title, with a link between Omega Red and Wolverine being discovered, and the X-Men plagued by a mystery from the past. $1.00

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<> **Amazing Spider-Man 356** (Milgrom & Bagley + Emberlin) 'Round Robin' part 4, with Daredevil, Moon Knight, Punisher and The New Warriors' Nova guesting. $1.00

<> **American Tail II** (Chichester & Wildman) Adaptation of simulatneously released film, featuring the adventures of Fievel Mousekewitz. $2.95

<> **Barbie Fashion 12** (Robbins & Connor + Lucas) Polynesian adventures. $1.00

<> **Deathlok 6** (Wright & Cowan + Manley) With the Punisher guesting, Deathlok tries to save his son from drug dealers. $1.75

<> **Fantastic Four 359** (DeFalco & Ryan + Bulanadi) Prevented from returning to Earth by "a being of immense power", Devos the Devastator, the FF are trapped in space. $1.00

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<> **Marvel Fanfare 60** Final issue. $2.25

<> **Marvel Universe Master Edition 13** (Kaminski & Gruenwald + Pollard + Rubenstein) Featuring High Evolutionary, Werewolf, Shroud, Mysterio and Tiger Wolf, with new feature section, plus pin-ups. $4.50

<> **New Warriors 18** (Nicieza & Bagley + Mahlstedt) Featuring the true origin of Night Thrasher.$1.00

<> **Silver Surfer 60** (Marz & Lim + Christopher) The Infinity Gauntlet at an end, the Silver Surfer leaves for outer space, where he runs into Midnight Sun. $1.00

<> **Spectacular Spider-Man 183** (DeMatteis & S. Buscema) 'The Child Within' concludes, with Spider-Man's final confrontation with the Green Goblin. $1.00

<> **Thor 441** (DeFalco & Frenz + Milgrom) Thor and company are caught in the middle of a battle between the Celestials and Ego. $1.00

<> **X-Force 5** (Liefeld & Nicieza) Featuring the return of the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants, with the Toad, Sauron and the Blob. $1.00

<> **X-Men Classic 66** (Claremont & Cockrum + Wiacek) Reprinting **Uncanny X-Men 162**. $1.25

SHIPPING OCTOBER 31ST

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<> **Conan Saga 57** (R. Thomas & Brunner) Conan's crowned King of Aquilonia and is forced to deal with the threat of the wizard Tsotha-Lanti in one of Robert E. Howard's most famous Conan sagas. Magazine format. $2.25

<> **Dr. Strange 36** (Infinity Gauntlet crossover; R. Thomas & Lawlis + McKenna) Dr. Strange wants to find out the extent of Adam Warlock's power, and will, the hard way. $1.50

<> **Marvel Comics Presents 92 Wolverine** part 8 (of 8; David & Keith) Final stand-off between Cyber and Wolverine; **The Beast** part 8 (of 8; Lobdell & Lee) Task of this issue is to save the Red Ghost's super-apes; **Northstar** (Matias & Bollers); **Ghost Rider and Cable** part 3 (of 8; Mackie & Yap) Showdown in the Cathedral of the Undead. $1.25

<> **Moon Knight 33** (DeMatteis & Garney + Palmer) Conclusion of the confrontation between Moon Knight and Hobgoblin. Spider-Man guesting, with repercussions for **Web of Spider-Man** in the future. $1.50

<> **The 'Nam 63** (Dixon & Vansant) Conclusion of the two-part POW rescue story, with the reappearance of Ice. $1.50

<> **Punisher War Journal 37** (Baron & Harris) A contraversial talk radio host is in the firing line this issue.

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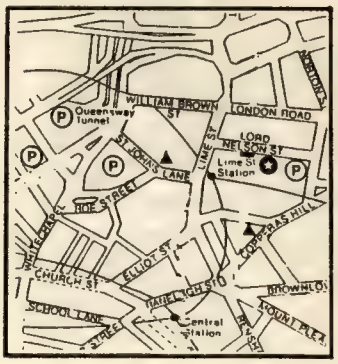

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<> **Magnus Robot Fighter 8** (Shooter & Hichcock, Lapham, Bolinger + Jade) Conclusion of 'Invasion' crossing over with the RAI flipbook series. Guesting Solar, Man of the Atom. 32pg $1.95

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<> **Solar, Man of the Atom 5** (Shooter & Perlin, Layton, Bolinger + Jade) 'First Strike', part 1 (of 4) 20th century 2000-year war of the worlds, including a history of the 'Invasion' saga in **Magnus Robot Fighter**, plus Barry Windsor-Smith's 'Alpha and Omega'. $1.95

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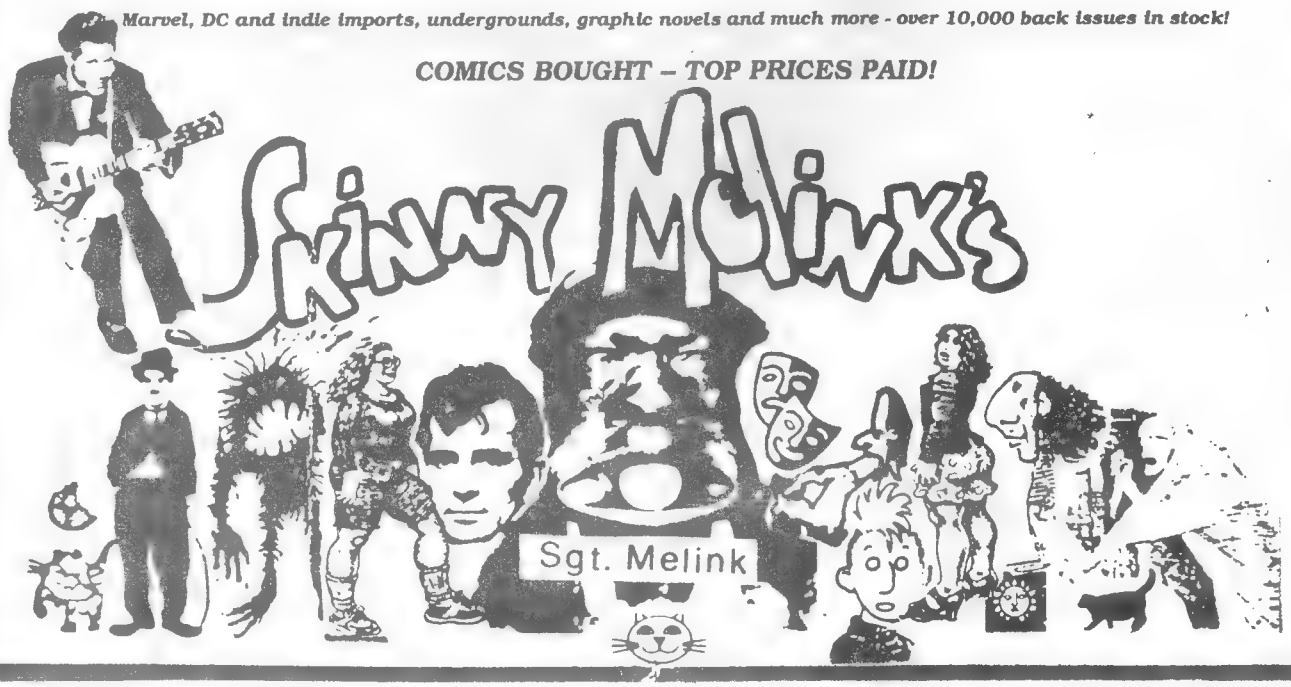

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● AVALON COMICS 143 Lavender Hill, London SW11. Mon - Fri 11.00 - 5.45, Sat 9.30 - 6.00 (imp, back, ind, Brit, STO) 071-924 3609

● COMIC SHACK, 720 High Road, Leytonstone, London E11 3NN. Mon - Thurs 9.30 - 5.30; Fri & Sat 9.30 - 5.30. Also by appointment, phone 081 555 9303 (back, fnz, merch, u/g, frgn, ppbks, hbks, m/o to wants list with sae) 081-539 7260

● COMIC SHOWCASE, 76 Neal St, London WC2. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00 excl Thurs 10.00 - 7.00; Sun 12.00 - 5.00 (imp, back fnz, merch, ind, u/gs, Brit, ppbks, hbks, cartoon books, original art) 071-240 3664

● FANTASY INN (6ft under The Book Inn), 17 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H OEP. Mon - Sat 9.30am - 10.00pm; Sun 11.00 - 8.00pm. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/gs, Brit, ppbks, frgn, hbks, m/o, RPG, STO, masks, fantasy/horror + sf ppbk, film mags) 071-839 2712

● FORBIDDEN PLANET, 71 New Oxford St, London WC1A 1DG Mon - Wed + Sat 10.00 - 6.00; Thurs + Fri 10.00 - 8.00 (imp, back fnz, merch, ind, u/gs, Brit, frgn, ppbk, hbk, m/o, film & tv fantasy) 071 379 6042

● GARY'S BOOK & COMIC STALL, Site A65, The High Street, Walthamstow, London E17. Thur + Fri 9.30 - 4.30; Sat 8.00 - 5.00. Tube: Walthamstow Central (imp, back, fnz, ind, ppbk, hbk, STO, annuals, children's bks.

● GOSH! 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1 (opposite British Museum) 10.00 - 6.00 7 days a week inc Bank Hols. Late nights Thurs & Fri til 7.00 (imp, back, ltd merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, ppbk, hbk, STO, largest selection of newspaper strip compilations in UK) 071 636 1011

● GRAPHICALLY SPEAKING, 475 Bethnal Green Road, London E2 9QH. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00; Sun 11.00 - 3.00 (imp, back, fnz, ind, STO) 071 613 0500

● HUNGRY BEAR COMICS, South London Book Centre, 18-19 Stockwell Street, Greenwich, London SE10. Wed, Thurs, Sat & Sun 9.00 - 6.00. (back, ind, Brit, ppbk, hbk, m/o: send sae with wants list to 57 Queens Rd, London E11 1BA 081 539 7095

● KRYPTON KOMICS & BOOKS, 252 High Rd, Tottenham, London N15 4AJ (next to Tesco) Mon-Fri 9.30 - 6.00; Sat 9-6.30. Tube: Seven Sisters Road. (imp, back, fnz, ind, ppbk, hbk, STO, m/o) 081-801 5378

● MEANWHILE... 6A Camden Road, London NW1. Mon - Fri 10.30 - 7.00; Sat & Sun 10.30 - 6.00 (imp, back, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, frgn, ppbk, portfolios, hbk, m/o -- send wants lists, customer enquiries welcomed.) 071-485 6600

● MEGA-CITY COMICS, 18 Inverness Street, Camden Town, London NW1 7HJ. Mon - Sun 10.00 - 6.00; late nights Thurs + Fri 'til 7.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, ppbk, film & tv fantasy, horror, body art, sub-culture (psychotronic, alternate reality, sub-genius, cult, etc.) m/o, STO) 071 485 9320

● SKINNY MELINK'S COMIC SHOP, 66 Loampit Vale, Lewisham, London SE 13. Mon - Fri 10.30 - 6.30; Sat 9 - 6; Sun 10 - 5.30. (imp, back, fnz, ind, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO) 081-318 0499

● TOP TEN SOHO, Unit 3, 9-12 St Anne's Court, Soho, London W1V 3AX. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, m/o, STO) 071-734 7388

● WHITE LIGHT (formerly Eternal Comics), 695 Seven Sisters Road, London N15. Mon - Sat 9 - 7.00. (imp, back, fnz, ind u/gs, Brit, original art, acid free backing boards, STO) 081-809 2022

Home Counties

● AMERICAN COMIC ENTERPRISE, 1 Headgate Buildings, St John's Street, Colchester, Essex C02 7AD. Mon - Sat 10.00am - 5.30pm. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts) 0206 561 912

● ATOMIC COMICS, 1112 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford Essex RM6 4AH. Tues - Sat 10.00 - 6.00 excl Fri 10.00 - 7.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, ppbk, hbk, STO, 2nd hand horror fantasy sf ppbks, original art, m/o - no lists, send wants list + sae or phone) 081-597 8547

● CALAMITY COMICS, 160 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2HR. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 6.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, videos) 081-427 3831

● CARTOON SHOP, Upper Galleries, Eastgate Shopping Centre, Basildon, Essex. Mon - Wed & Sat 10.00 - 6.00, Thurs & Fri 10.00 - 8.00. (imp, back, fnz, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, RPG) 0268 534194

● CARTOON SHOP, 21-22 Talza Way, Lower Ground Floor, Victoria Circus Centre, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. Mon - Sat 9.30 -5.30 (imp, back, fnz, ind, merch, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, RPG) 0702 613021

● DYNAMIC COMICS (formerly The 4th Dimension Comics), Units 70-72, In Shop Centre, Church St, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1RB Mon - Fri 9.00 -5.30; Sat 9 - 6.00pm. (imp, fnz, STO, ppbk, merch) 081 681 2597

● EDGE OF FOREVER, Units 14 & 15, Bexleyheath Shopping Hall, 45 Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO) 081-303 5099

● ENIGMA THE GATEWAY, 22 Keeley Road, Croydon. Mon - Fri 8.30 - 6.30; Sat 8.00 - 6.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, Brit, ppbk, ind, u/g, STO, RPG & supplements) 081 680 4434

● SIEGI'S COMICS & BAGS, Unit 3, 6 Orange St, Canterbury, Kent. Mon - Sat 9 - 6 (imp, back, fnz, ind, merch, Brit, ppbk, STO, tv SF, gum cards, classic sf memorabilia, m/o) 0227 470840

● SPACED OUT COMICS, 31 Hazelwick Road, Three Bridges, Crawley. (near Three Bridges train station) Mon - Sat 10.00 - 8.00, Sun by appointment only. (imp, back, fnz, ind, Brit, u/g, m/o, STO, discounts available) 0293 531736

● STRANGE DAYS, 9a The Parade, Northgate, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 2DT. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 6.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, ppbk, m/o, STO, RPG) 0293 522803

● STATESIDE COMICS PLC, 125 East Barnet Road, Barnet, EN4 8RF. Mon - Wed 10.00 - 7.00; Thurs & Fri 10.00 - 8.00; Sat 9.00 - 6.00; Sun 10.00 - 3.00 (or later by appointment). (imp, back, fnz, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, hbks, tv-film & fantasy, ppbk, m/o, STO) 081-449 5535 (10 lines)

● TIME TREK, Shoppers World, 17 The Mall, High Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1TR. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (late Thurs to 8.00) (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, TV sf & film related merch, STO) 081 313 0677

● WHATEVER COMICS, The Harvey Centre, 22-24 Stour Street, Canterbury, Kent. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.00 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, model kits) 0227 452677

Midlands

● ANOTHER WORLD, 23 Silver Street, Leicester LE1 5EU. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 0533 515266

● ANOTHER WORLD, 11 Market Street, Nottingham. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 0602 484 122

● ARRIVAL COMICS, 2 Broad Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1HP. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.15. imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, ppbk, hbk, m/o, horror videos, adult (non-porn) mags. 0902-313 660

● BOOKWORM, Unit 3 33-39 Tower Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk. Mon - Sat 11.00 - 4.00. (back, ind, u/g, Brit, ppbk, hbk, fantasy & sf, early Penguins, general fiction & non-fiction, records) 0553 760904/771880

● CENTRAL CITY COMICS 4 Eagle Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 1JB. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, wants lists with sae) 0473 233 017

● COMICS ABOVE TULIP, 3 Heathcote Street, Nottingham, NG1 3AF. Saturdays only 9.30 - 5.30 (back, ppbk, hbk, wants lists with SAE) Entry through Tulip florists shop.

● FANTASY WORLD, 10 Market Square Arcade, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1NU. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, RPG, rock t-shirts, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 0782 279294 (fax 0782 202381)

● MISSION CONTROL, 282 Aylestone Road, Leicester LE2 7QT. Mon - Fri 1.30 - 9.00pm, Sat 9.30 - 6.30. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, RPG, Brit, fantasy & horror sf film tv bks. sae for details) 0533 440573

● NOSTALGIA & COMICS, 14-16 Smallbrook, Queensway, Birmingham. Mon - Thurs 9.15 - 5.45, Fri + Sat 9.15 - 6.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO) 021 643 0143

● NOSTALGIA & COMICS, 20 The Burgess, Coventry. Mon-Fri 10.00 - 5.30pm; Sat 9.00 - 6.00pm (imp, back, fnz, ind, Brit, ppbk, hbk, STO)

● OUTER LIMITS 4 The Broadway, Bedford, MK40 2TH. Tues - Sat 9am - 6.00pm, Mon 9am - 8pm. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, RPG, video) 0234 358581 (24hrs)

● OUTER LIMITS, 12 King Street, Luton LU1 2DP. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 6.00, Thurs late night until 8.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, RPG, video) 0582 422082

● PLANET X, 5 London Road, Worcester Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.30. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, m/o, STO - advance orders taken monthly) Phone/fax: 0905 355055

● SQUONK, 25 Midland Road, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 1HA. Mon - Wed 10.00 - 5.30; closed Thurs; Fri 9.30 - 6.00; Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, Brit, merch, ind, u/g, ppbk, m/o, STO) Phone/fax 0933 442340

● STRANGE TALES, 3 Hurts Yard, Nottingham NG1 6JD. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00 (imp, back, fnz, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, hbks) 0602 411 325

North West

● ARCADIA COMICS, 12 Clarence Arcade, Stamford Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 7PT. Mon + Thurs

to Sat 10.00 - 6.00pm; Tues + Wed 10.00 - 4.00pm. (back, ind, horror & sf mags, Dr Who, Trek, Brit, m/o -- sae for list) 0706 844129 (eves)

● 4th DIMENSION, Back Piccadilly, Piccadilly, Manchester Mon - Sat 11.00 - 6.00 (back, sf & horror novels, postcards, Doctor Who, Star Trek, mags & much more).

● IMAGINATION STATION, Unit 28, Portland Shopping Centre, Botchergate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 1NT. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.00 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, ppbk, STO)

● ODYSSEY 7, 21 Hanging Ditch, Corn Exchange Buildings, Manchester M4 3ES. Mon - Sat 9.30am - 5.30pm. (imp, back, sf-fantasy-horror books, postcards, videos, badges, soundtracks, stills, LF filmbooks, Star Trek, Doctor Who.) 061 832 7044

● ODYSSEY 7, Precinct Centre, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9RN. Mon - Sat 9.30am - 5.30pm (imp, back, sf - fantasy - horror novels, postcards, posters, badges, stills, LF film books, Star Trek, Doctor Who, etc) 061 273 6666

● OGRE BOOKS, 120 Picton Road, Wavertree, Liverpool 15. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.00 (imp, back, merch, ind, ppbk, fnz, Brit) 051 733 0149

● THUNDERBOOKS, 332 Lytham Road, Blackpool. 10.00 - 5.30 Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat all year; Mon & Sun in season (closed Wed). Out of season open Wed, closed Sun + Mon. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, limited u/g, Brit, frgn, kits, limited ppbk, m/o, t-shirts, media collectors' items) 0253-48321

● THUNDERBOOKS II, 116 Friargate, Preston, Lancs. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, limited u/g, Brit, frgn, limited ppbk, m/o, kits, t-shirts, media collectors' items. 0772-204287

North East

● BOOKS N' COMICS, Unit 15, Forbes Building, Linthorpe Road, Middlesborough, Cleveland TS1 4AW. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, fnz, merch ind, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, Fleetway, horror-sf-fantasy ppbks, film mags, Doctor Who, Star Trek, bags boxes & accessories) 0642 249 143

● BOOKS N' COMICS, Unit 8, Regency West Mall, Princes Regent Street, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, fnz, ind, merch, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, Fleetway, horror/sf fantasy ppbk, film mags, Doctor Who, Star Trek, boxes bags & accessories) 0642 617 241

● DELLS COMIC & BOOK STALLS, 129 Kirkgate Market, Bradford 1. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.00 excl Wed 9.00 - 3.00 (imp, back, merch, ind, ppbk, hbk, STO, horror masks, tv fantasy magazines) 0274 390 541

● GROUND ZERO, 11 Hanley Arcade, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 1NQ. Opening mid-August -- Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.00pm. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, m/o, STO, accessories)

● NOSTALGIA & COMICS, 12 Matilda, off the Moor, Sheffield, Yorkshire. Mon - Fri 10.00 - 6.00; Sat 9.15 - 5.30 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, original art, model kits, sf & fantasy ppbks, horror magazines, newspaper strip compilations) 0742 769475

● NU EARTH COMICS, 4 Davygate Centre, York Y01 2SU. Mon - Fri 10.00 - 5.30; Sat 9.00 - 5.30. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, RPG, art bks, fantasy-tv mags) 0904 611 461

● ODYSSEY, 6 Harrison Street, off Vicar Lane, Leeds LS1 6PA. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30 (imp, back, LF film books, sf - fantasy - horror bks, posters, postcards, badges, stills, Trek, Who, etc) 0532 426 325

● ROCKS OFF, 85 Westgate, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 2RD. Mon - Fri 10.00 - 5.30, Sat 9.30 - 6.00 (imp, back, ind, merch, fnz, Brit, STO) 0274 736 292

● SHEFFIELD SPACE CENTRE, 33 The Wicker, Sheffield, Yorks. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.00 excl Wed. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO, Star Trek items) 0742 758905

● SKYRACK BOOK SERVICE, 51 The Superstore, Merrion Centre, Leeds LS2 8LY. Yorkshire. Mon - Sat 9.30am - 5pm; excl Weds: 9.30am - 1pm. (imp, back, ind, Brit, STO, SF hbk ppbk & magazines - many pulps, m/o) Established 1965.

West

● FLOPPY TONGUE COMICS, 100 Fisherton Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP2 7QY. Mon -Sat 9.30 - 6.00 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o, STO) 0722 331107

● THE HOBBIT HOLE, 6 Commercial Rd, Gloucester, Glos. Mon 12.00 - 5.30; Tues - Sat 10.00 -5.30. (imp, back, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, ppbk, hbk, STO, T-shirts, film, tv mags and merch) 0452 309 538

● JOY'S COMICS, 25 High East Street, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1EZ. Mon - Sun 7.30 - 6. (imp back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, u/g, ppbk, hbk, m/o) 0305 269737 after 6pm 833804

● WONDERWORLD, 803 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6AP. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, ppbk, m/o, STO, FRPG & miniatures, Games Workshop specialist stockist) 0202 422 964

● WONDERWORLD, Unit 2, Bevois St, Southampton S01 1JD. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, ppbk, STO, FRPG & miniatures) 0703 234815

Wales

● CARDIFF FANTASY CENTRE, 1st Floor, Jacobs Market, West Canal Wharf, Cardiff. Sats only 9.30 - 5.00. (imp, back fnz, merch, ind, ppbk, hbk, computerised STO, videos; establ 12 yrs) 0222 563005

● COMIX SHOPPE, 13 Shoppers Walk, Swansea SA1 3AY. Mon - Fri 10.00 - 5.00, Sat 10.00 - 5.30. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, ppbk, m/o, STO, u/g, film/tv magazines) 0792 642097

● FORBIDDEN PLANET, 5 Duke Street, Cardiff. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.30 excl Thurs 10.00 - 6.30. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, ppbk, hbk, STO) 0222 228885

● JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY, The Emporium, 34 Castle Arcade, Cardiff. Thurs - Sat 10.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, fnz, ind, u/g, ppbk, STO)

● NEGATIVE ZONE, Provision Market Gallery, High Street, Newport, Gwent NP9 1DD. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.00. (imp, back, fnz, ind, Brit, STO) 0633 222159

Scotland

● AKA BOOKS & COMICS, 33 Virginia Street, Glasgow G1 1TU. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.30; Sun 12.00 - 5.00. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, ppbk, STO) 041 552 8731

● AKA BOOKS & COMICS, 25 Parnie Street, Glasgow G1 5RJ Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.00pm; Sun 12.00 - 5.00 (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, ppbk) 041 552 6692

● BLACK HOLE COMIC SHOP, The Market Hall, Wellgate Centre, Dundee. Mon - Sat 9.00 - 5.30 (imp, back, ind, u/g, STO)

● DEAD HEAD COMICS, 44 Victoria Street, Edinburgh, EH1 2JW. Mon - Wed, Fri, Sat: 10.00 - 6.30; Thurs 11.00 - 7.30; Sunday 12.00 - 4.00. (imp, back, fnz, ind, Brit,ppbk, hbk, STO) 031 226 2774

● FORBIDDEN PLANET, 168 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2LW. Mon to Wed 10.00 - 5.30; Thurs + Fri 10.00 - 6.00; Sat 10.00 - 5.30. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, frgn, ppbk, hbk, STO) 041 331 1215

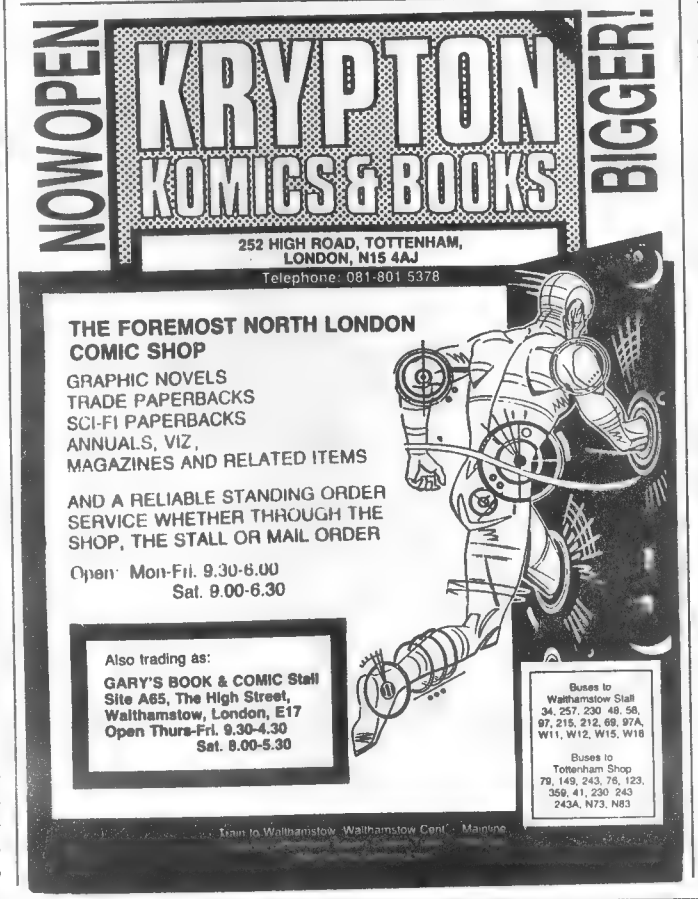
● FUTURE SHOCK, 89 Byres Rd, Partick, Glasgow G11. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 6.00; Sunday 1.00 - 5.00. (imp, back, merch, ind, u/g, Brit, hbk, ppbk, m/o, STO, SF & horror ppbk & hbk, film bks & mags, artwork, jewellery) 041 339 8184

● PARKER'S COMICS, 340 King Street, Aberdeen AB2 3BJ. Mon - Fri 9.00 - 5.00; Sat 11.00 - 5.00 (imp, back, frgn, u/g, ppbk, m/o, STO) 0224 635835 fax: 647952

● SCIENCE FICTION BOOKSHOP, 40 - 42 West Cross Causeway, Edinburgh, EH6 9JP. Mon - Sat 10.00 - 5.30, excl Thurs till 6.30. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, frgn, hbk, ppbk, m/o, STO) 031-667 0426

Northern Ireland

● TALISMAN COMICS, 36-37 Smithfield Market, Belfast 1. Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30. (imp, back, fnz, merch, ind, Brit, u/g, ppbk, hbk, STO) 0232-438 744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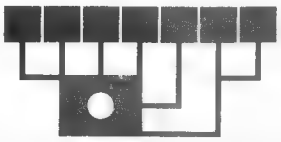
KATHY ACKER

BUT STILL BANNED BY 90% OF COMIC SHOPS



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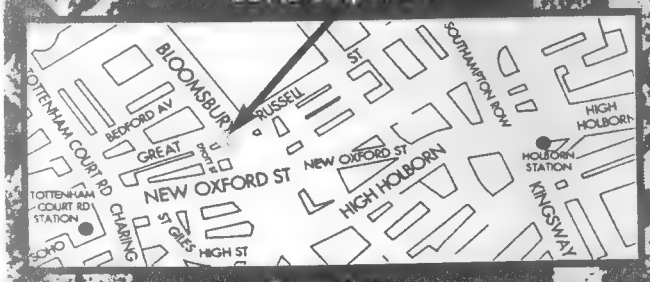

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COMMENT

***Comment** is intended to enable fans and professionals alike to express personal points of view on aspects of the comics industry.*

As such, the opinions stated do not necessarily reflect those of the publication, and space will be given in subsequent issues to opposing views. Editing of accepted manuscripts will be done only as a matter of grammar, clarity and space consideration.

No Wonder, Boy

Comment by Andrew Harvey, Leytonstone.

AMID THE flurry of warmed-over cliches and Archie revivals, DC is launching its answer to the mighty Marvel X-books and Spidey hype. So what DC character are they using to equal the multi-million sales that Marvel got from their multi-cover or card-carrying record breakers?

According to this month's DC promo sheet, Coming Comics, they've come up with a nifty gimmick, hologram covers, and no less than 14 versions to drive the fans crazy. But who's their big gun character about to bask in public stardom? Their answer to X-Men and McFarlane's Spider-Man . . .

ROBIN, for crying out loud!

Didn't we vote to get the wimp killed off a few years back? Who really gives a hoot about the boy wonder. Starlin blew his cred with DC by revealing that they'd no intention of letting the kid live when they were counting their income of the phone-line vote. According to writer Starlin, they'd made their minds up so they didn't even draw up a survival episode.

Warners didn't want him in the movie, we don't want him in the comics. Vigilantes don't have kid sidekicks and no-one wants to identify with a wisecracking child.

So, strike one for the choice of character. Not popular, no potential, and already done to death. But if DC can't think of a top notch character for its big launch, what about the creators?

Who is DC's fan favorite equivalent of Todd McFarlane and Jim Lee all set to draw the boy wonder?

Who is going to give the kid the old Frank Miller or Tim Truman treatment?

Tom Lyle.

Maybe I missed something, but I don't remember him winning too many awards over the years. Chuck Dixon (didn't he write **Airboy**?) is scripting and Bob Smith is inking.

I mean, come on, nothing against these guys, but if you're wanting record sales and all you've got on your side is a (re)tired character, you need the absolute top team behind it. And the top sales hype. DC acts like it's embarrassed by the event. They don't even give it page one of their Coming Comics mag. That's shared between the again delayed Batman/Dredd team-up and a revival of Archie's Black Hood.

If this was Marvel, we'd have had a six month overkill build-up. Everyone would know about it. But DC released it cold, no more advance publicity than **Aquaman, Clash** and **The Butcher/Green Arrow** six-parter it shares space with.

Even their intro copy sounds like an apology, "Last year's **Robin** miniseries... did three printings of issue #1 and two printings of issue #2 before the excitement waned." WANED? Outside of a bad pun for mentor Bruce Wayne, that word's a no-no. Negative sell.

Waned indeed. So why a second series if the excitement waned after two issues of the last one? The not too confident build-up continues with "A special promotion pack with poster and stickers is planned ...". Soft sell. In the face of heavier competition than ever before, DC gives us negative buzz words and soft sell.

We deserve more, you deserve more, and DC should be able to give us more. What happened to their direction? Have all the ideas team retired. This is the '90s, DC, stop going through these hit or miss motions and let's have some good stuff.

We are not talking Jefferson Pierce here. Up against the ghetto's drugs, prostitution and poverty as Black Lightning. Original stuff, guys. And what's with this *Black* Lightning moniker? Or Marvel's *Black* Panther and *Black* Goliath. Is this some kind of marketing ploy in case no one noticed these guys aren't caucasian? What's next, Spanish Fly? Yellow Claw and Red Wolf revivals? How about prefixes on other new superhero titles like *White* Aquaman? Just when you thought DC had passed the days of an eskimo called Pieface and a Chinese cook called Chop-Chop.

Within Reason

Comment by Mike Cruden, Manchester.

AS THE subject refuses to go away, I'd like to comment on the censorship debate, as recently covered in your feature about the laws governing obscenity in Britain.

Having a ten-year old son who's just getting interested in comics puts a totally new perspective on

censorship for me. How much do I want him protected from the gorier depictions of violence and sex. He'll be very interested to hear the answer to that question as he'll probably be reading this.

The answer is, as much as is reasonable, bearing in mind my own responsibilities as a parent.

In other words, I don't want him to be able to browse around my local comic shop with me and be able to leaf through some comic showing graphic violence or items of a sexual nature.

By graphic violence I would quote as an example the glass through the hand scene in **Arkham Asylum**. Sexual violence would include the Joker's fun and games with Barbara Gordon in **The Killing Joke**. Both are Batman titles, so they have an obvious appeal to young readers.

All I would ask is that comics with such content be high-shelved by retailers and/pr shrink wrapped by publishers, so that inquisitive ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen and maybe fourteen year-olds can't be corrupted by the images therein.

Do those images corrupt? Probably not, in the sense of making someone an evil person who doesn't already have tendancies that way, but certainly in the sense of corrupting values. There is a growing abuse of violence in society and an increasingly-detached attitude towards sex, which I'm sure nobody would deny is largely because of values imparted by the media.

The values which comics impart are already far from idea; read a copy of **The Beano** and you'll see all sorts of prejudices being promulgated, and the main message in amongst the hysteria of the super-heroic world is that violence is the answer to everything, and that women have a generally very subservient role in the world.

These values would hopefully be countered by what children, specifically boys, witness within their own families. But sadly for many boys these values are reinforced rather than balanced by what they see within their own family structures, with violence within the family, especially towards women and children, very much on the increase.

When I was a young lad (cough, cough) I thought that creators should be able to publish or print or film anything, and then it was up to the reasonable discerning adult to decide what was or was not for them and those for whom they were responsible. Unfortunately, many adults aren't reasonable, both in what they chose to view for themselves and especially what they allow their children to view.

Every teacher can recount tales of very young children being allowed to watch material which is terribly inappropriate for them. I can vouch for five-year olds being allowed to watch the Freddy/Nightmare films, and then their parents being mystified as to why their children are so hyperactive, bad-tempered and violent, and unable to concentrate longer than 5 minutes.

So whose fault is that? The irresponsible parents, undoubtedly, but perhaps also the people who package excess gore and extreme violence. Given that there are so many unreasonable, irresponsible people in society, including parents, I feel that there needs to be some strict guidlines on what violence can be depicted in celluloid and print, and that some of the gore of some of the films of the last few years ought not to have been permitted. I believe that those films would have been just as effective with the excesses expunged, and if they weren't as effective they probably weren't worth making in the first place.

Sex is a different matter altogether and one of the big mistakes of Those Who Have Power is to constantly link violence and sex in discussions and rulings about censorship. More enlightened societies (eg. Scandinavia) censor much more violence than we do but allow much more sex, and providing that that sex doesn't involve violence or a debasing of people, then why not?

Hot Books, 1991

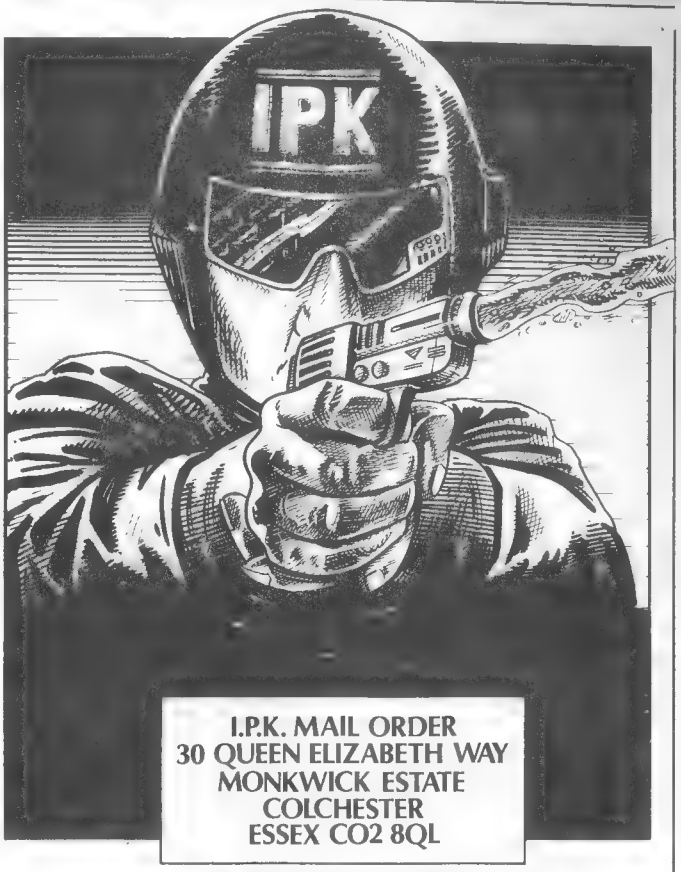
Comment by Scott Manning, Graphically Speaking

THE COMICBOOK collector's market has always been subject to change; books that were previously worthless suddenly become sought after overnight. Recently, we have seen a huge increase in demand for "silver age" books with a subsequently huge rise in price, so that most of the books are out of the price range of the majority of fans.

Instead, collectors are now seeking out 'hot' recent titles and related books from the '70s and '80s. For example, first appearances and guest-spots by re-introduced characters.

The following is a list, by no means exhaustive, of titles most in demand at the moment and a few to watch out for in the future.

Alpha Flight 51 (first Jim Lee art)
Astonishing Tales 25 (first Deathlok)
26-28, 30-36 (Deathlok)
29 (Guardians of the Galaxy origin reprinted)
Books of Magic 3 (hard to find)
Captain America 285-288 (Deathlok)
Captain Marvel 27 (2nd Thanos)
28 (3rd Thanos)
Deadly Foes of Spider-Man (scarce)
Deathlok 1 (2nd series)
Deathstroke 1



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X-Men 248, 256 - 258
269 - Present
Alpha Flight 51
Solo Avengers 1

NEW MUTANTS/LIEFELD
New Mutants 86 - 100
New Mutants Ann. 5
Marvel Comics Presents 51 - 53
X-Factor 40 X-Men 245

GHOST RIDER
Ghost Rider (1) 1 - 50
Ghost Rider (2) 4 (Scarce)

HULK
Hulk 377 (1st Print), 378

LOBO
Lobo 1 - 4
Omega Men 3 (1st appearance)
Omega Men 5 (2nd appearance

ROBIN
Robin 1 - 5
Batman 457 (1st costume)

SPIDERMAN (McFarlane)
Spiderman 1 - 14

ALIENS
Earth War 1 - 4
vs. Predator 1 - 4
DH Presents 34, 35, 36

FANTASTIC FOUR
Fantastic four 347 - 349

WEAPON X
Marvel Comics
Presents 72 onwards

SUPERMAN EXPOSED!
Action Comics 662
Superman 53

TERMINATOR
Terminator (DH) 1 - 4
Secondary Objectives 1 - Present
Terminator one-shot
T2 movie adaptations

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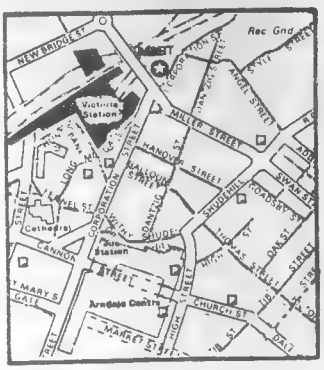

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Double Dragon 1 (a surprise hit)
Ghost Rider (v 2) 4 (scarce)
(v 2) 15 (Glow cover)
Guardians of the Galaxy 1
Hawk & Dove mini 1-5 (Liefeld)
Hawkworld Annual 2 (hard to find)
Hulk 376 (Hulk vs Hulk)
Iron Fist 14 (1st Sabretooth)
Iron Man 55 (1st Thanos)
Logan's Run 6 (Thanos/Destroyer)
Marvel Presents 3-12 (Guardians of the Galaxy series)
Marvel Spotlight 33 (Deathlok)
Marvel Team-Up 15 (Ghost Rider)
Marvel Two-in-One 8 (Ghost Rider)
New Mutants 86 (1st Cable, cameo, also first Liefeld art)
New Mutants 87 (1st Cable story)
New Mutants 88-100
Annual 5 (1st Liefeld work on New Mutants)
New Teen Titans (v 1) 2 (First Deathstroke)
New Warriors 1-8
Omega Men 38 (1st Lobo solo story)
Powerman 66 (2nd Sabretooth)
84 (3rd Sabretooth)
Silver Surfer 34 (re-intro Thanos)
Solar 1 (the Valiant title)
Thor 411 (1st New Warriors, cameo)
412 (1st New Warriors story)
432-433 (New Thor)
Wolverine 8 (Liefeld back-up)
41 (relationship with Sabretooth revealed)
X-Factor 40 (Liefeld)
63 (1st Portacio art)
64 (Portacio art)
67 (spotty distribution)
X-Men 245 (Liefeld)
248 (1st Jim Lee X-Men)
256-7, 268-277 (Jim Lee)
267 (Portacio art)
X-Men Classics 39 (2nd Jim Lee art on X-Men

Other books highly sought after include all Ghost Rider appearances (there are so many they should rename him Guest Rider, Punisher and Wolverine cross-overs, Dale Keown **Hulk** and Jim Lee **Alpha Flight** issues.

Books to watch for in future include all '70s short-run titles such as **Champions** and **Nova**, but in particular:

Batman Family 20 (Ragman)
Black Lightning 1-11
Marvel Comics Presents 85 (Keith/Liefeld)
90 (Cable/Ghost Rider)
Marvel Premiere 1-2 (Warlock)
New Titans 70 (1st solo Deathstroke)
Ragman 1-5
Strange Tales 178-181 (Warlock)
Warlock 1-15

And that about raps it up. For those of you attending, have a good convention and happy hunting!

Direct Distribution: The Retailer's Risk

Comment by Phil Hall, Squonk Comic Shop

TO COMIC fans generally, a lot of what I'm about to say will mean very little, so I apologise now and warn you to skip the rest of this piece. But to many advocates of the advance order system, the following will be a very familiar and often frustrating problem.

All comics shop owners, mart dealers and mail order businesses who order advance comics will have ordered something that, by the time it arrives two to three months later, is not what was originally announced. This doesn't happen very often, but when it does, it can cause real problems.

Not true state our importing distributors. If you order **Fantastic Four 342**, you'll get **Fantastic Four 342**.

But, when **Fantastic Four 342** was ordered, it was promoted as a Walt Simonson issue. But, because of deadlines or somesuch, what arrived was a fill-in issue. Apart from to the aficionado and stamp collector mentality, this issue lost all of its selling power.

In America, if a book is a fill-in issue, the dealer has the option of cutting back. In this country, this practice is unheard of.

But UK distributors hear within a week of America if an issue is going to be a fill-in, so dealers could hear by the next post. If thedealer cannot then get back to the supplier within a a pre-allocated time, then they deserve to be stuck with dead copies.

Pointless you might think. Fill-in artists and writers don't affect sales. So how many times have you seen piles of fill-in issues gathering dust on the shelf while issues before and after have already sold out?

Or the opposite extreme when Art Adasm and the multi-talented team up for issues of **Fantastic Four**, but you discovered a month too late and even regular buyers can't find copies. How many of us actually get the chance to reorder?

Given the sudden reshuffle in the distribution area, I hope the increased sense of competition will lead to UK dealers getting a treatment as good as our American counterparts.

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REVIEWS SECTION

It is the intention of ***Comics International*** *help you, the comic reader, keep abreast of the entire range of titles currently available through direct sale specialist shops and mail order companies. While few retailers would allow your to read all titles in stock before choosing your purchases, our reviews intend to point titles out to you that you might otherwise have ignored. Naturally, this section should be of even greater benefit to readers having to rely on mail order, as they only discover the quality of a new title after purchase!*

Review codes: *Titles general competitive performance 1 to 10. Specific issue's quality against previous issues: - - - to + + +*

In fairness and to be thorough, we use two ratings. The number following each review (on a scale of 0 - 10) is a quality comparison with other ***similar*** *titles currently being published. We make no attempt to compare* ***Love & Rockets*** *to* ***Batman,*** *but treat each within the context of its own genre.*

The individual issue is also rated within the confines of its previous issues. Hence a comparatively dull title may get a low number, but a high rating for the specific issue reviewed (ranging from - through to +++) if it has suddenly improved and is worth a look.

Reviewing panel: Ahmet Ali, Sarah Bolesworth, Les Chester, Jason Cobley, Jonathan Farmer, Steven Fountain, Phil Hall, Peter Hayward-Brewer, Danny King, Skinny Melink, John Morell, Peter C. Phillips, Derek G. Skinn and Alan Woollcombe

DC COMICS

Action Comics 668 <+> (Stern & McLeod + Rodier) Is Luthor really dead? Metropolis doubts it, thus forcing Superman to provide cast-iron proof. If nothing else, it shows how the media can pervert the facts in the cause of sensationalistic journalism. (PCP) 8

Action 669 <+ -> (Stern & McLeod) yet another strong Superman entry, here featuring the return of the lovely Thorn, while Clark and Lois' in-laws get together. Supe's on a real roll of late, non-readers really ought to have a look. (SM) 8

<+ -> Intergang muscles in on the Planet picket strike, only to find the Thorn. Too often in superhero books the presence of the awesomely competent star relegates the other characters to the role of mere spectators or, worse, victims. Not so here: sure, Clark deals with problems of the costumed type but there are situations that he can't handle that others, sans mask and tights, do. It's such everyday limitations which give him believability beyond the comic norm. (AW) 6

Action Comics Annual 3 (Stern & Grummett, Rodier, Garzon, Hazelwood + Vancata) Somehow retaining a subconcious memory of his merger with Waverider (**Superman Annual**) Superman carries out a specific act which changes the previously revealed future and leads him to becoming President of the US of A... Difficult to see where this series is going with its subversive "what if" variations. (PCP) 6

Yet another excellent, thoughtful Armageddon cross-over, with strong pencils by Grummett and a host of inkers. Whoever would've thought that they'd manage to get two such fine stories from such a shallow character as Superman? (SM) 9

A great premise for a lot of "what if" stories no longer allowed under DC's new post-CRISIS management is taken under full advantage of by one of DC's best writers. And to see Guy Gardner get his long-awaited comeuppance is a joy. All this, and a Dave Gibbons cover too. (AW) 8

Adventures of Superman 481 <+ -> (Ordway & Grummett) Four Supe titles per month are about one or two too many, but this one might be the best thanks to the presence of the underrated Grummett, and Ordway's proven ability to spin a fair yarn. (SM) 7

<+> Subway passengers become skeletal corpses when The Parasite hits town. (PCP) 8

<+> Subplots rule as the Man of Steel tries to subdue the Parasite in the subway tunnels. The Coronation Street of superhero soaps - there's always something going on. Addictive. (AW) 6

Adventures of Superman 482 <+> (Ordway & Grummett + Hazelwood) Slugfest time between Superman and the Parasite, and Rose Forrest makes her long-awaited return. Even so, the scenes between Lois and Superman are still the main highlights. (PCP) 7

<+ -> Blessed with the best-defined cast of supporting characters of any mainstream superhero comics, giving a real sense of a fictional DC universe. (AW) 6

Animal Man 39 <- -> (Veitch & Mandrake) A comic that's lost all sense of direction. Every issue reads just like the previous one, these days. A shame to see so good a comic fallen on such hard times. (SM) 5

Batman 467 <+ -> (Dixon & Lyle + Mushynsky) A sequel to the Robin mini-series with the supposedly dead King Snake moving in on Gotham with Robin as his main target for revenge. Rewrites every macho-vigilante scenario seen to date. (PCP) 4

Batman 468 <+ -> (Dixon & Lyle + Mushynsky) So-so actioner as King Snake's gang tightens its grip on Gotham and Batman tries hard to keep Robin out of harm's way. Unoriginal and wearisome. (PCP) 3

Batman: Full Circle (Barr & Davis + Farmer) More clutter is added to the "new" Batman legend when Joe Chill's son becomes the new Reaper. Passable but relies on too many coincidences. (PCP) 7

Batman: Tales of the Demon <+> (O'Neil & various) All the O'Neil Ra's al Ghul yarns in one volume. This is not the current day Dark Knight and, despite the introduction, the stories don't hang together at all well - inconsistencies abound. Still the Adams-drawn ones are worth the price of admission. (AW) 6

Challengers of the Unknown 7 <+ -> (Loeb & Sale) Challengerville has gone totally psycho and it's up to the regrouped Challs to do something about it - once they get out of Hell. Still packs a punch. (JF) 9

Comet 2 <+ > (Lyle & Waid and Lyle & Hanna) The mystery of the Comet's missing family is put on hold as he takes on the sinister Applejack to save the life of his tv journalist girlfriend. So far, the best of the Impact titles. (PCP) 8

Deathstroke the Terminator 2 <+ -> (Wolfman & Erwin + Blyberg) Once again, Deathstroke accomplishes the impossible by dispatching numerous adversaries and displaying his prowess. There's too much reminiscing and no plot to speak of. Nice cover, though. (JF) 4

<-> A bit heavy on the explanations, almost like this was a second first issue. but otherwise there's plenty of action and intrigue, nicely rendered via Erwins' clean, confident pencils. (SM) 7

The Demon 15 <+ -> (Grant & Semeiks + Smith) Lobo plays with the lives of untold millions and has The Demon as sparring partner. Very silly goings-on as Earth faces ultimate destruction. (JF) 7

Detective 634 <+> (Puckett & McDonnell) Two amateur detectives with more than a passing resemblance to the Snoop Sisters (anyone remember them?) get involved in a murder mystery of international proportions. Not to be taken at all seriously and a welcome diversion for that very reason. (PCP) 7

Detective 635 <+> (L. Simonson & Fern + Mitchell) Video games come to life linked with mysterious happenings at Arkham Asylum. A chance for Weezie to show her undouted talents with perfect visuals from Fern and Mitchell. (PCP) 7

Detective 636 <+ -> (L. Simonson &Fern + Mitchell) Not quite so enthralling second episode as the computer game assault continues directly into the Bat-Cave precipitating a visit to Arkham and a "startling" discovery. Louise cleverly shows Batman to be completely out of his depth and having to rely on Robin for solutions to the gaming problems. (PCP) 6

Dr Fate 31 <+ -> (Messner-Loebs & Truog) Messner-Loebs is on to a good thing here, and it's surprising that more writers haven't tried it. Dr Fate is a superhero more concerned with neighborhood problems and social injustice, than with saving the universe from the latest super-threat. Last issue she brought a murdered cop back from the dead; in this one she changes a Donald Trump-type property developer into a tramp. On the downside however, regular penciller Vince Gairrano has left the book, to be replaced next issue by the little known Scot Eaton. (SM) 9

Flash 54 <+> (Messner-Loebs & Laroque + Marzan Jr.) A very unpredictable title, this - one month it's trite (last issue) and the next it's unusual and intriguing. Here, our hero attempts to rescue a woman who has fallen from an airplane in mid-flight. (JF) 7

<-> Not much to grab onto here, more of a breather or fill-in, and a mite far-fetched, to boot. (SM) 5

The Fly 1 (Strazewski & Parobeck + Fricke) Jason Troy is given a school assignment by his class professor - whom no one later remembers - and, would you believe it - acquires superhuman powers. A weak character in a flyweight plot. (PCP) 2

Green Arrow 50 <+ -> (Grell & Hoberg + Nyberg) Dinah becomes part of a hostage situation on the first date with her bent-cop boyfriend. Naturally, Olie has time to fly halfway around the world to play white knight whilst Seattle cops sit on their hands. Reads like a re-write of an 'Equalizer' episode. (PCP) 4

Green Arrow 51 <+ -> (Grell & McManus) Guest artist McManus's weird, cartoony pencils are particularly annoying when he palsters these Joker-like grins on Dinah Lance. That aside, Grell's on a roll with a tight storyline. (SM) 8

<++> Sex-starved Dinah making up for lost time almost pulls Ollie into an early grave. Luckily for him, the Seattle cops - still peeved at being made to look like idiots (GA51) try to fit him up on a murder rap, giving him a life-saving excuse to vacate Dinah's bed and hit the streets. McManus makes for a sexy guest artist but can't draw sexy women to save his life. (PCP) 5

Green Lantern: Emerald Dawn II 5 <+ -> (Giffen & Jones + Bright) Hal Jordan returns to Earth with tutor Sinestro in time for a jailbreak which also involves Guy Garner as...a social worker?! More rewarding than the regular series. (AW) **7**

Green Lantern: Emerald Dawn II 6 <+> (Giffen & Jones + Bright) Back to Oa for Sinestro's court martial for the last part of Green Lantern's continued origin series (**Emerald Dawn I** is available as a trade paperback). With any luck, this will be too. (AW) **7**

Hawk & Dove Annual 2 (B. Kesel & various) Waverider unveils three possible futures for Hawk & Dove discounting any possibility of either of them becoming Monarch. Could be a red herring in this one. Nice visuals from a multitude of artists - Swan, Barnett, Morrissette, Cullins, Gammill, Lewis and Statema. (PCP) **7**

Hawkworld 15 <+ -> (Ostrander & Nolan) A War of the Gods tie-in. The gods of Thanagar are summoned and proceed to possess unwilling hosts. These tie-ins are becoming a theme as the gods learn that Earth is not where they belong and so decide to leave. The art, however, is improving. (JF) **7**

<+> War of the Gods, part 4. Shayera returns to Earth just in time to be possessed by a Thanagarian goddess in what is little more than a marketing ploy issue of little significance. (PCP) **3**

Hawkworld Annual 2 (Ostrander & Kwapisz) A look at the future of Katar and Shayera - courtesy of Waverider - that serves little purpose other than to introduce a manic robot adversary. Long winded and tedious with appalling art and colours. (PCP) **2**

Hellblazer 44 <- -> (Ennis & Simpson) How the mighty are fallen. Ennis takes forever to get to the point, the inconsistent Simpson is unsuited for the title, and colourist Tom Ziuko's dull, flat tones are a terrible mistake, all of which makes this formerly scintillating comic a strain to read of late. (SM) **4**

Hellblazer 45 <+ -> (Ennis & Simpson) In which Constantine wriggles out of the tight jam. Ennis is getting better as he gets the hang of the title, but Simpson has got to go. (SM) **6**

The Jaguar 2 <+++> (Impact Comics; Messner-Loebs + Williams) Issue one was good, introducing and establishing Maria and her supporting cast. This second issue gest into gear; we learn more of the origin of the Jaguar and feel more empathy for Maria herself. Very reminiscent of early Spider-Man crossed with Supergirl stories in **Action Comics**. A good, uncomplicated read. (PHB) **7**

<+> Maria learns more about the source of her powers and encounters a peeping tom in the girls' shower room. Good fun all around, although the peeper may disagree. (PCP) **7**

Justice League America 54 <+ -> (Giffen & DeMatteis, Wozniak + Smith) The League is re-formed as the New Ambassador shakes up the roll call. Wozniak's art is adequate for the most part, but nothing special. (JF) **6**

<+++> Beetle & Ice get fired and join other ex-JLers in plotting a covert operation against the Queen Bee. Excellent stuff. (PCP) **8**

Justice League Europe 29 <+ > (Giffen & Jones, Robertson + Beatty) Captain Atom is kicked out of the League and then gets his butt trounced by the Global Guardians. Some days it just doesn't pay to get out of bed - but the readers won't be diappointed. (PCP) **8**

Justice League Quarterly 4 <+> (various) A mix-max of stories ranging from excellent to passable to dismal, involving, in that order, The Injustice League (Jacobs & Pearson + Elliot) Ice & Petey (DeMatteis & Robertson + Beatty) and the unnamed JL cat (DeMatteis & Rogers + Russell). (PCP) **3**

Legend of the Dark Knight 20 <- -> (O'Neill & Von Eeden + Braun) The bold art and Steve Oliffe's usual exquisite colouring job doesn't compensate for a tedious and at times silly story, stretched thin to fill five issues - it should've ended with number three. And don't you hate when the baddies are about to unmask the superhero, then decide to wait for later? That kind of thing irritated me when I was five years old, and nothing's changed. (SM) **3**

Legend of the Dark Knight 21 <+ -> (Oliffe & Barr + Sears) I list colourist Steve Oliff first because he is an integral part of this comic, and it is impossible to overpraise his enormous contribution to comics' colouring. His revolutionary colour process produces subtle shades and gradients of tones and colours that have never been seen before in comics. Anything he touches is instantly lifted to sublime heights. That aside, this story of Bat-vigilantes is a tad lethargic, 'though it looks like it might pick up along the way. (SM) **7**

<+++> Reformed junkie forms street vigilante gang to back up Batman's fight against drug-pushers. Trouble is, he's a few cards short of a full deck. Leslie Thomkins guests to good effect. (PCP) **7**

Legion of Super-Heroes 22 <- +> (Gordon & Giffen, T.& M. Bierbaum + Pearson) In some ways this is almost two comics, the first section is the second part of a tedious story, which is adding nothing to the general storyline of the Legion.

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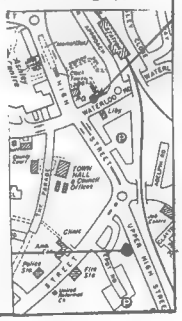

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Darkseid is searching for a little girl, using the objectionable Lobo, and a few legionnaires have stumbled in the way. The second section contains some beautiful artwork from Jason Pearson, and moves the continuing storyline on, building to what looks like an exciting and worthwhile plot. (PHB) 6

L.E.G.I.O.N. '91 30 <+++> (Grant & Kitson) Any comic that has Lobo trashed on the cover is well worth buying. This has to be the best issue of LEGION yet. It has a feel of the 'real' Legion with a wonderful 'applicants try-out' section, with the classic rejectee. But the best of all, Phase (the former Phantom Girl) beats the crap out of the loathsome Lobo, (does anybody like this awful deadbeat?) Finally, to add the icing on the cake, the return of Stealth. At last this book is worth buying. (PHB) 9

New Gods 28 <-> (Evanier & Hoberg) Lightray debates whether to bring an innocent road accident victim back to life. Final issue of a series that died in a coma long ago. (AW) 2

Outlaws 1 (Friedman & McDonnell) In an unspecified future a band of rebels hold out against an unlawful regime. A not too inspired story, where, in the first issue, we learn the individual (very basic) motivations of the protagonists. Even McDonnell's usually stylish art grates. (JF) 4

Predictable and largely pointless transplanting of the Robin Hood legend into an unspecified future era. Forget it! (PCP) 2

Robin Hood (again?) in dystopian future, 'though as is often the case, the first issue does little more than set the table. Reminiscent thus far of Camelot 3000 in both concept and execution, 'though whether it's really a match for that fine series remains to be seen. (SM) 7

Sandman 29 <+> (Gaiman & Woch + Giordano) A mixture of elements from 'A Tale of Two Cities' and 'The Scarlet Pimpernel' as Lady Johanna Constantine visits Paris of the French Revolution in search of Sandman's son. Classic entertainment. (PCP) 8

<+> Marvelous, enchanting tale of Revolutionary France, with Stan Woch filling in nicely on art. Gaiman at his best is probably comicdom's finest storyteller. (SM) 10

Sandman 30 <+ -> (Gaiman & Talbot + Woch) This issue Bryan Talbot lends his skill to an excellent story concerning the Roman Emperor Augustus. Gaiman blends truth and fantasy to provide a rich and insightful tale. (JF) 9

<+> Woe, woe and thrice woe! All that's missing is Frankie Howerd in this overly talkative but nonetheless exhilerating excursion to ancient Rome focusing on Augustus Ceasar's brutal treatment at the hands of his perverted Uncle Julius. (PCP) 9

Shade 14 <- -> (Milligan & Talbot) Dry, off-kilter issue, with a feel of deja vu to it, and while Talbot does his best, he's no match for the sublime Chris Bachalo. (SM) 6

Shade 15 <+> (Milligan & Bachalo) Let's hear it for the winner of the the Skinny Melink award for the best regualr comic, ta-da! Milligan is back on track after an off-pace issue; his best stories are truely riveting tales, and he has invested his characters with depth and humanity, a rare thing in comics. Chris Bachalo's pristine, elegant pencils are simply the best in the business, and Mark Pennington appears to be his perfect inker, while Daniel Vozzo's colours perfectly suit the book. The drinks are on me, guys! (SM) 10

The Shadow Strikes! 23 <+> (Jones & Whigham + Fernandez) With most of his agents captured or killed by Shiwan Khan, the Shadow at last begins to fight back in the third part of this excellent story. At this chapter's conclusion, Khan takes Margo Lane to China with the Shadow in hot pursuit, and we are promised yet more secrets from Margo's dark past. Gerard Jones' writing gets better all the time, the art and colouring are also good: the comic is a real pleasure to read. (LC) 8

Starman 37 <- +> (Strazewski & Hoover + Richarson) Colonel Computron turns out not to be what he first appeared to be, and romance blossoms for Starman and Rampage. One question not resolved is how Phantom Lady gets her costume to stay up. Oh yeah, its' the CCA sticker that does it! (PCP) 5

Starman 38 <- -> (Strazewski & Calimee + Richardson) War of the Gods, part 5. Achilles' hormones hit overdrive, convinced that Phantom Lady is Helen of Troy. Standard multi-page slugfest follows. (PCP) 2

Star Trek: The Modala Imperative 4 (of 4; Friedman & Marcos) Final episode that wraps up a less than inspiring mini-series with Kirk, Chekov, Spock and McCoy variously held captive by the bad guys before returning to the comfort and security of the Enterprise. Despite the weak plot, Friedman's dialogue has been spot on and Pablo's art hasn't looked this good for years. (PCP) 6

Star Trek: The Next Generation: The Modala Imperative 1 (of 4; David & Marcos) 100% improvement over the **Star Trek: Modala** series, guest-starring Admiral "Bones" McCoy and the legendary "Mister Logic" Spock. Just like watching a tv episode and an event not to be missed. (PCP) 9

Superman 59 <-> (Jurgens & Breeding) A rogue Linear Man gives Superman a chunk of time to spend with Lois asking, once again, Why Is There A Superman? Apparently the answer is not Because He Sells! The art's a bit shaky but it's not

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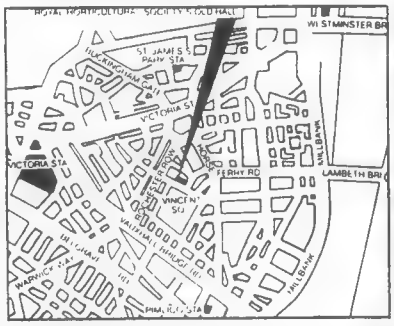

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unenjoyable. (JF) 6

<++> Superman and Lois finally find the time to discuss their hopes and fears. Riveting. (PCP) 9

<+> Fine issue as Clark and Lois takes a breather from their hectic schedules to briefly commune with one another, and try to get some perspective on their lives and relationship. A bonus is the fine Daily Planet facsimile. (SM) 9

<++> Adult themes treated with insight, plus crisis-handling and fisticuffs to keep the kiddies from getting restless. Superior soap. (AW) 7

Superman: The Man of Steel 3 <+ -> (L. Simonson & Bogdanove + Janke) War of the Gods, part 3. A pointless cross-over excercise that has Superman in conflict with terrorists and the Mayan serpent-god Quetzalcoatz amidst some awful visuals from Bogdanove & Janke. One to avoid. (PCP) 3

<-> Un-super artwork and a Mayan serpent deus ex machina can't save this poor effort. (AW) 3

Swamp Thing 110 <+> (Collins & Mandrake + DeMulder & Jaaska + DeMulder) Bible-thumping preacher believes in saving his flock by poisoning them. True horror returns to this title and not before time. (PCP) 9

War of the Gods 1 (of 4; Perez & Martin + Tanghal) A very confusing story which fails abysmally to accomodate new readers. Not the epic beginning one would have wished for. (JF) 5

Excellent opening issue to this year's big cross-over. Great mini-posters and loads of good, under-used DC characters - Zatanna, Son of Vulcan, Troia and Captain Marvel! The stage is set for an epic battle of the different gods and for once Wonder Woman gets a deserved, strong leading role. (PHB) 8

Recent Wonder Woman plot threads pull together as Circe brings about a war between the various pantheons with Earth's heroes stuck firmly in the middle. Good for what it is - that being another multi-part cross-over chapterplay and which most fans are beginning to detest - if they haven't already done so for years. A message to the powers that be - make this the last! (PCP) 6

Sadly the plot in this first issue is not robust enough to cope with such an overload of deities and heroes, and Perez's layouts really only suit Perez - penciller Cynthia Martin makes it all resemble a holiday hero traffic jam. Diappointing. (AW) 5

Wonder Woman 58 <++> (Perez & Thompson + Tanghal) War of the Gods, part 2, and which won't make any sense to anyone who hasn't been following this title for the past 12 months. In this segment, Heracles finds Atlas holding up - not the world - but Themyscira - and making a lousy job of it, while Diana is still on the police 'most-wanted' list. Not a good jumping-on point. (PCP) 8

Wonder Woman 58 <+ -> (Perez & Thompson) The Amazon peace mission to 'Man's World' has collapsed amid massacres; Queen Hippolyte has gone missing and there appear to be two sets of gods fighting over who owns Olympus. Pared of all the other DC heroes, the 'War of the Gods' storyline is perfect for Wonder Woman, out of whose Greco-Roman mythological background the whole concept was hatched. Regular mass cross-overs have devalued the currency of guest appearances beyond belief - isn't it time a moratorium was declared on all such hero alliances? (AW) 6

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Avengers West Coast 76 <+ -> (Thomas & Ross) Roy Thomas has recreated the feel of the old Avengers comic immediately after the founder members departed, with a somewhat shambolic, squabbling new team. These definately aren't the seasoned professionals Captain America's squad is (that is, the Avengers proper). Here, they face another assemblage of also-rans, the Hangman's Night Shift, who hang out in Marvel's original House of Shadows and menace film studios to earn a dishonest buck. (AW) 4

Conan 247 <+ -> (Thomas & Hartle) Sadly, Thomas can't quite conjure up the old Conan magic, judging from his current second tenure on the title so far. Apparently, though, he'll at least get the chance to try, as rumours of Conan's imminent cancellation seem to be unsubstantiated. (SM) 6

Conan 248 <+ -> (Thomas & Docherty) Slowly but surely, as they say, Thomas is getting this book back on course, and Docherty is a welcome surprise replacement for Greg Hartle, who never seemed to feel comfortable with this title. Still, it wouldn't hurt for Thomas to re-read some of those classic early Conan stories that he wrote (particularly the Barry Smith issues) to help him remember what made those issues so memorable. (SM) 7

Daredevil 296 <-> (Chichester & Garney) Ninjas aplenty as Daredevil reaches a momentous decision. In that uncertain terrain staked out by obsessive vigilantes, DD is a more complex figure, a Chandleresque tarnished hero, torn between his twin passsions for the law and for justice, even if it takes him outside of the boundaries of the law. Writer Dan Chichester gets to the core of the man in a way that very few have, and writes great comics noir thrillers in so doing. (AW) 7

Daredevil 297 <+> (Chichester & Weeks) Daredevil sets out to topple the Kingpin of crime: first step, put away Typhoid Mary - and he does, in a most unusual fashion. Despite his physical prowess, the Kingpin maintains his empire primarily by outsmarting his opponents and rivals. For the first time, Daredevil abandons his scruples and adopts the same tactics against him, and we get to see how much of a sacrifice that is. Masterful storytelling, with Mazzuchelli-esque pictures. (AW) 8

Deathlok 2 - 3 <+> (McDuffie & Cowan) Great subtext (cyborgs and robots as an oppressed minority, great villain (Dr. Doom) great chunky art (Denys Cowan) great plot (Dwayne McDuffie). Marvel's answer to Robocop has somehow emerged fully blown as one of their most impressive regular titles. (AW) 8

Dr Strange 32 <-> (R. & D. Thomas + Marrinan) The purpose of super-guest stars is mainly to attract new readers to the title, so maybe the presence of the Silver Surfer, Warlock, Dr Doom and the lovable Pip the Troll will let a few more people in on the fact that this is a consistently excellent book. Otherwise, Doc's regular cast of Clea, Rintrah, Sarah and Wong et al are interesting enough in their own right without being crowded out of their own book by the supergroup. (SM) 7

<+ -> Saving the universe from Thanos has to wait while Strange goes amulet to amulet against Silver Dagger. Sad to see the sorcerer supreme having to fight for space in his own magazine, while the Bill Everett-like art gives him an oddly werewolfish look. (AW) 4

Dr Strange 33 <+ -> (R. & D. Thomas & Marrinnan) Mesmerising hokum as Doc an Clea travel back in time to hobnob with Julius Cesar and Cleopatra. Marinnan is your average, competent penciller, but wouldn't it be nice to see the exquisite Jackson Guice back on this book? (SM) 8

<+ -> Thanos claps his hands and Strange is blown away - to Cleopatra's Egypt. Once again the Doc's own priorities and life have to be put on hold while the real action goes on elsewhere, but at least this Infinity Gauntlet tie-in does advance the main storyline a fraction. (AW) 4

Hulk 384 <- -> (David & Keown + Farmer) Proof of the old adage that no one's perfect, as this dismal issue falls far below the team's standard. Farmer must have done the lion's share of the art, but who the hell really wrote this wretched, cliched and disjointed story? (SM) 4

Infinity Gauntlet 3 <+ -> (Starlin & Perez) Or, Secret Wars III, really, isn't it? One shouldn't expect anything like depth and subtlety from these mega-buster-multi-cross-over things, they're meant solely to entertain and deliver loads of action and excitement along the way. As such, this is a grand success. Kudos to Starlin and Perez for making this such an enjoyable surprise. It's certainly good value for money, and one of the best of it kind that Marvel's come up with for many a year. (SM) 9

<+ -> Adam Warlock assembles the Earthly heroes and the great powers of the universe and gets them all to agree to his master plan. Nice touches add character to what could all too easily be just another mass scrimmage - the Hulk's chat with Wolverine, for instance. Perez's pencils, too, make this a vast improvement over Marvel's usual efforts in the mass team-up stakes, although Joe Rubenstein's inking does the art no favours. (AW) 6

Iron Man 271 <+ -> (Byrne & Ryan) Tony Stark undergoes medical tests on his collapsed nervous system while James Rhodes battles Fin Fang Foom. Terrific plot build-up, so-so art. (AW) 7

Iron Man 272 <++> (Byrne & Ryan) Major revelations about the connections between villain-in-the-background the Mandarin, his strange helper and Fin Fang Foom. Meantime, Stark is in hospitla and Iron Man ought to be. Writer Byrne twists some of Marvel's oldest characters this way and that to great effect. (AW) 7

Iron Man 273 <+ -> (Byrne & Ryan) Here be dragons aplenty as Fin Fang Foom's crewmates shuck their disguises and head for the hills, where two Iron Men are barely coping with Fin on his own. Classic storyline that keeps on increasing in pace and scope. (AW) 7

Marvel Comics Presents 83 <- -> (Barry Windsor-Smith) The story so far: scientists are conducting a sinister experiment on Logan. He wakes up, gets angry, and attacks them. End of story. It has taken Marvel and Smith over six months and 12 issues to do this, making it by far the biggest 'unevent' in recent comics history. Smith is sill a stunning artist, but Marvel should take some of the substantial profits they're making off this dreck, and send Smith to writing school. (SM2

<+ -> Able to speak again, the torture Weapon-X climbes out of the frying pan to give the Professor his just desserts. But who has

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beenbehind the Professor? Barry Windsor-Smtih's origin of Wolverine nears its climax. Meantime Hawkeye, Firestar and the Human Torch feature in the comics equivalent of B-movies. (AW) 6

Marvel Comics Presents 84 <-> (Smith et al) 'Nothing is revealed', Bob Dylan once said, no doubt after he finished this forgetable glitz, that leaves more unanswered questions about Wolverine than before it began. (Wonder who told Barry Smith that he could write?) (SM) 3

<+> The grand finale to the Weapon-X rampage is extended to twenty-four pages as the now sentient Wolvie finally breaks free, leaving still unanswered questions in his wake. Can't wait for Weapon-X Year II.... P.S. - there's also a Firestar story tucked into the back of the book. (AW) 7

Namor the Sub-Mariner 18 <+ -> (Byrne) Love, death, world conquest and betrayal in the Savage Land, with all the also-rans from John Byrne's previous Marvel strips pitching in. How to make a feast out of leftovers... (AW) 7

Nick Fury, Agent of SHIELD 27 <+> (Chichester & Guice) Hydra's attack on SHIELD's graduation day ceremony leaves SHIELD devasted. Meanwhile Marvel's two arch-Nazi super-villains hold a summit meeting. The good old days of intrigue and high-tech world domination are back as the SHIELD series finally regains the momentum it had under Jim Steranko. One of Marvel's best. (AW) 9

Nick Fury, Agent of SHIELD 27 <- -> (Chichester & Stiner) Fury seeks help from his bosses and friends without much success, while Hydra spreads its tentacles into the UN. A fill-in artist and several holes in the plot renders this a curate's egg, but the good parts easily outweight the bad. (AW) 6

She-Hulk 31 <+++> (Byrne) The last twenty-three issues tourn out to have been a bad dream as John Byrne takes up where he left off. Proof that Marvel can easily produce a parody that's both funny and well-drawn. (AW) 8

Silver Surfer 55 <+ -> (Marz & Lim + Christopher) As the Infinity Gauntlet progresses it becomes more clear that it doesn't matter what's happening as it will all be negated in the conclusion. Although fun, it's all pretty pointless, really. (JF) 6

<+ -> Well done Infinity Gauntlet cross-over sustains the tension of the surprisingly good mini-series. At this point it looks like the only being who can beat Thanos is... Thanos! (SM) 8

Thor 435 <+> (Frenz & DeFalco + Milgrom) The writing team is starting to show signs of life, 'though they've still got a ways to go to retain the excitement Thor once provided. (SM) 6

<+ -> Everybody pitches in to save the slumbering Odin from Annihilus while Eric Masterton's friends and associates ponder his disappearance. Ever wonder what the Thunder God was like after Stan and Jack left him and before he was picked out of the gutter by Walt Simonson? This is it. (AW) 3

Thor 436 <+ -> (DeFalco & Frenz) Old returns a week back on Earth as the Absorbing Man and Titania pop up again to go a few rounds with the new Thor while he tries to sort out the mess of his human life. Thor these days resembles nothing so much as the old pre-CRISIS Superman: powerful beyond belief and possessing a well-defined supporting cast, his comic has been around for so long that nobody can think what to do with him - he's done it all before, several times over. (AW) 3

Uncanny X-Men 280 <+> (Nicieza & Kubert) The final demise of the Shadow King marks the end of the Muir Island saga and brings the team back to the status quo ante Chris Claremont. With Claremont apparently off the X-Books for good and the giant mutant membership reshuffle due next issue, things are looking more fluid for the X-teams than they have for years. (AW) 6

Wolverine 44 <-> (David & Stroman) Fair enough fill-in fluff, though not up there with David's current **Hulk** stories. Stroman is no match for regular artist Silvestri, 'though not many are. p.s. Am I the only one who didn't get the mysterious ending? (SM) 6

Wolverine 45 <-> (David & Stroman) Predictable retread rushed out for the bi-weekly summer onslaught, largely a waste of talent. (SM) 5

Wolverine: Bloody Choices (Graphic novel; DeFalco & J. Buscema) DeFalco manages to sustain the intensity in this well-paced tale of a driven Wolverine, despite a predictable plot and the presence of an abundance of cliches. Artist Buscema will always earn his pay, but it's been a long time sicne he was inspired to the brilliance he's shown in the past. (SM) 7

Wonder Man 1 (Jones & Johnson) Another exceedingly average offering from Marvel, perhaps a little sillier than most. Jones' light-hearted approach doesn't quite

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work, while Johnson's art lacks style and would, and Joe Rosaa turns in an appallingly poor colouring job, 'though I wouldn't be surprised if Marvel told him to jazz it up a bit lest DC grab all the glory in that department. (SM) 5

X-Factor 69 <+ -> (Nicieza & Portacio) Professor X finally gets to meet his first students, before they all go camping on Muir Island in search of his nemesis, the Shadow King. Action, action all the way as Portacio's dynamic layourt fight off an overload of mutant mayhem (AW) 7

X-Factor 70 <+> (David & Jarvinen + Rubenstein) This is going to be one of the mutant books to watch. The triumphant Peter David makes his mark this issue and will be joined by the excellent Larry Stroman next month. Everything's the same but it'll all be different. (JF) 7

<++> The Muir Island epilogue. This issue is obviously written for true X-Men fans. At last the book ties up lots of loose ends, has some nicely written humour and sets the scene for the new teams. Some classic lines like "In mutant heaven there are no pearly gates, but instead revolving doors". You can tell that Chris Claremont is no longer about. (PHB) 7

<- -> New regular scripter David has Xavier trying to revive his brain-dead son, Legion, while everyone ponders what to do with fourteen X-Men - an anticlimax after all the excitement of the past few issues. Jarvinen's guest pencils also seem lacklustre by recent standards. (AW) 4

X-Men 1 (Claremont & Lee) The biggest-selling comic of all time, and one of the most eagerly anticipated and it's -- not too bad, actually; certainly far superior to last month's dismal **X-Force** , and several notches above Claremont's usual confused hyper-drivel. In his swan-song, Claremont presents the return of a solemn and dignified Magneto, with a suitably regal air about him. On the minus side, there's far too much dialogue, causing a clutter of word balloons. Furthermore, Claremont has a well-known tendency to over-dramatise, seen at its worst here - a trait he's unfortunately passed on to artist Jim Lee, who's gone overboard on bold, stunning pages that lose their impact after the first few, and are not helped by Joe Rosas' bright colours. Over all, mutant fans won't be disappointed, and others just might be surprised. (SM) 7

INDEPENDENTS

Armor 10 <+ -> (Continuity; Stone & Springer + Nebres) The second part of the Krack House story is just as enjoyable as the first, with Armor and his brother breaking heads, taking on corrupt cops and dishing out a little poetic justice into the bargain. Springer and Nebres again turn in a nice art job. (LC) 7

Bronx 1 (Eternity; Saichann) These little vignettes are all right as such, but they beg for a bit of substance, while Argentinian Saichann's masterful pencils cry out for colours. Could have been better. (SM) 7

Cheval Noir 20 <+ -> (Dark Horse; various) New this time around is David Lynch's 'Angriest Dog in the World' strip, which will be as much of an aquired taste as 'Twin Peaks'. Otherwise, 'The Forever War', 'The Great Power of the Chninkel' and 'Voyage to Italy' all maintain their high quality, and there's also Rork, Tardi and the welcome return of Fred and Bob. An excellent comics package. (LC) 8

The Comics (University Press of Mississippi; Coulton Waugh) This newly reprinted study of American (mainly New York) comics up to 1947 (when it was first published) is a must for fans of the funnies. Two caveats: the dates, which the introduction warns are not necessarily to be relied upon; and the widespread contemporary bias against comicbooks, which at the time were regarded as poor relations and so are not covered in any great depth. Otherwise, enjoy! (AW) 7

Curse of the Mole Men 1 (Kitchen Sink; Charles Burns) Reprint of a Big Baby story in colour for the first time, and it looks magnificent. Burns is one of a kind, with a style and sensibility uniquely his own. He writes and draws like his mind was permamently warped by overexposure to grade B horror movies at an impressionable age. For those not yet initiated into the weird and wonderful world of Burns. Mole Men will provide a delightful introduction. (SM) 10

Femforce 38 (AC; various) A 3-story fem-fest which loses some momentum by being continued from the previous issue. The Blue Bulleteer WW2 actioner pitting her against Lady Luger and a bogus Black Commando (Heike & Gorby + Hunt) is, for good girl art alone, the best of the crop. (PCP) 6

Frost 2 <+ -> (Caliber; VanHook) The story continues to intrigue, if not impress, but the art is still a strange mix of nice pencils and fairly bad inks: VanHook certainly isn't the artist he thinks he is but the book is nevertheless pretty decent. The story is split 50/50 between Vietnam flashbacks (pencils only) and the modern-day mercenary stuff, and it's the former that is the best. (LC) 6

Good Girl Art Quarterly 4 (AC; various) The Femforce/Shapeshifters chapterplay comes to rather a limp conclusion (Moore & Moore + Hunt) leaving the way clear for some classic good girl art reprints - Sky Girl thwarting a movie lot kidnapping (Baker), Sheena

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protecting a lost valley and its vast store of gems (Webb & Heames) and Looie Lazybones avoiding Clarabelle's marriage trap (Frazetta). The reprints outshine the new material by light years. A Sheena retrospective rounds out the issue. (PCP) 8

Green Hornet 1 (Now; Dixon & Smith + Mowry) A new series picking up from where the old one left off, but offering a more gritty and violent mix. Mishi - the female Kato - returns with a new secret ID far removed from her previous incarnation. Dixon is back to his best even though the basic plot - mobsters take over city - follows well worn grooves. (PCP) 7

Hero Alliance Quarterly 1 (Innovation; various) Excellent tongue-in-cheeker (Broderick & Z. Toth, Thompson + Perez) in which three sexy sirens prevent four unnamed but highly recognisable characters - Bruce Wayne, Matt Murdoch, Billy Batson and Barry Allen - from acquiring super-powers. This light-hearted tale is oddly backed up by a yarn of somewhat more adult leanings (Buckley & Pearson) with Kris Dunlop seeking to test her power levels and using her medic for some out-of-hours sexual gratification. Pearson snatches the art honours from a disappointing Perez contribution and would seem to be an artist to watch. (PCP) 6

A clever lead strip presenting a quirky 'what if' type look at some of the (unnamed but obvious) pillars of the superhero establishment, but let down by an appalling cheesecake back-up story. (AW) 6

Horror in the Dark 2 <+ -> (Fantagor; Corben) The two Corben stories in this book are up to his usual high standards, with the first one in particular being a splendid example of the noirish Poe-type tale and featuring fore and mammaries in equal measure. The central story, which at first I took to be a '70s Corben reprint, turns out to be drawn by Raul Demingo, and very nice it is, too. (LC) 7

Interview with the Vampire (Innovation; Wood and Phillips) The latest in a seemingly endless line of Anne Rice adaptations, this time putting the pictures to the story of Louis, recently mentioned in **The Vampire Lestat** comic. I enjoyed the book when I read it many moons ago, and the painted art here by Joseph Phillips will help to ensure that this book is another success for Innovation. (LC) 8

King Kong 4 <- -> (Monster; Simpson) After a promising start, this book has slid fairly rapidly downhill. I don't especially mind that the art is a little cartoony, but Simpson seems to have relaxed his style too much and goes for the easy option of too many full-page panels; he's just a monster fanboy. Worse still, his Kong looks like a cuddly toy. What a shame, I was hoping for a comic as good as (in comics terms) the film. (LC) 4

Livingstone Mountain 1 (Adventure; Moncuse) A going-nowhere first issue introducing a monster exterminator and his ally - a dragon that can only breathe fire from its backside. Lacks any sense or purpose. Art Adams provides a 2-page back-up equally worth missing. (PCP) 0

Magnus, Robot Fighter 5 <+> (Valiant: RAI 1; Shooter & Creddick + Layton) Two for the price of one; Magnus, now an outlaw, makes some new friends and continues his fight. Exceptionally crisp artwork, good storytelling and excellent colouring. The back half of the book, (or perhaps that's the front if you turn it round) features a new robot fighter-hero, RAI. The same highly skilled, professional approach as with **Magnus**. Publishers Valiant should waste no time and get him onto his own book.

Megalith 6 <+> (Continuity; Stone Netzer + Garvey) A much improved storyline this time, complemented by good, solid comics art. There's a lot going on this issue, with aliens kidnapping Earth children and Megalith fighting (yet) another large monster after turning down a drug company's offer to advertise steroids. Enough threads are left dangling to make me want to come back for more. (LC) 6

Ms Mystic 7 <-> (Continuity; Stone & Choates + Akin) As far as these things go, the art is good comics work, but the script is one of the stupidest things I've ever read, and written in a very stilted way. I suspect the problem lies with the characters who are almost entirely unsympathetic, and the lead heroine who is nearly omnipotent one minute then childlike and vulnerable the next. This book needs a lot of work. (LC) 4

The Mummy 5 <+ -> (Millenium; Perozich & Mooney + Menendez) Having arrived in Egypt, Ramses brings a mummified hand back to life with his elixir of immortality. Having proved it still works, he then discovers the mummy of his ancient lover, Cleopatra, and does the obvious. Too late, he realises that a mummy has the vital parts missing... this is cracking stuff.

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(LC) 8

Nightmares on Elm Street 1<+ -> (Innovation; Mangels & Harris) Andy Mangels' script is fine, and the painted art, by newcomer Tony Harris, is pretty good if a little disjointed in places (and very bloody, all the way through). I'm not a fan of the movies, but I enjoyed this for what it is, a good horror comic. Lovely painted cover by Miles Teves. (LC) 7

Opera (Eclipse; Russell) It's always risky to attempt to translate great works of art into another medium - they always loose somethin in the translation. P. Craig Russell here adapts four classic operas - Wagner's 'Parsifal', Strauss's 'Salome', Mahler's 'The Drinking Song of Earth's Sorrow' and Debussy's 'Pelleas & Melisande'. The effect (with pre-Raphaelite-style illustrations) is to restore them to their folktale and mythological roots - very readable, beautifully rendered and recommended for a far wider audience than they will probably get. (AW) 9

Personality Classics 1 (Personality; Spire & Diaz + Antomattei) You'll need True Grit to read this turkey which deserves putting on a stagecoach to sink without trace in the Rio Grande. It's a potted, told-by-numbers life story of John Wayne that dies on page 1 and never recovers, taking all of two minutes to "read" and omitting most of the facts and missing out most of the legend as well. Badly written (and that's being generous) appalling visuals (a chimp could do better) and unbelievable spelling errors. An insult to readers and the subject matter himself. Does it get a rating? The Hell it does! (PCP)

R.I.P. Comics Module 8 <+ -> (TSR; Moench & Hoseley + Akin) Moench bring us the story of 'Brasher: Avenger of the Dead' to a very successful conclusion, with large sprinklings of gore mixed with irony, and along the way leaves room for possible sequels. The second story (part 2 of 'Junkyard Dogs') is quite neatly done, though the ideas are not new and the ending is slightly telegraphed. The TSR comics modules generally are good, and require no games knowledge to enjoy them. (LC) 6

Robin Hood (Eclipse; Truman & Schenk) For any Robin Hood story to work, there's got to be a good sense of fun and adventure above all else, and Jones scores fairly high in that area. The flat tones and watercolour-style artwork won't be to everyone's liking, byt they bring a nice earthy look to the comic, and a fairytale sensibility. (SM) 8

Rocketeer: The Movie (Disney; David & Heath) Nice appetiser for the movie that retains many of the elements of the original Dave Stevens story, despite necessary licensing changes. Heath's art has never looked better - and neither has Betty (or herein, Jenny) posing in stockings and suspenders. Hubba-Hubba. On the Disney banned list, so not easy to get hold of a copy but more than worth it if you can. (PCP) 10

Rocketman: King of the Rocket Men 1 (Innovation; Chris Moeller) Calculators at the ready? OK: When I was a boy back in 1962, I paid my sixpence every week to go to Saturday morning pictures; not for the cartoons or the stupid Old Mother Riley films but for the serials - Batman ('43 and '48) and King of the Rocketmen. Now I can live those Rocket moments all over again, thanks to the superb painted artwork of Chris Moeller, who also scripted this adaptation and is a real find. I know this comic wouldn't exist if it weren't for Dave Stevens'"Rocketeer' (and vice versa, of course) but this really is the goods and significantly better than the comics versuion of the modern film. Buy it! (LC) 9

Probably the most screened movie serial of them all is given a painted and extremely invigorating re-telling, no doubt to cash in on the 'Rocketeer' movie. A must have for anyone's collection. The plot? You know it by heart - rocket scientists are murdered by Dr Vulcan. Enter Dr Jeff King in his Rocketman outfit for cliffhanger adventures. Gorgeous cover includes sneaky tribute to the Republic Pictures studio. (PCP) 9

Rocky Lane Western Annual 1 (AC; uncredited) Attempted murder, feuding families and silver-smuggling rustlers provide three investigations for Republic's motion picture hero and secret Marshal, Alan "Rocky" Lane. A photo adaptation of Lane's 'Salt Lake Riders' is a bonus. (PCP) 8

Solar: Man of the Atom 2 <+ -> (Valiant; Shooter & Perlin, Layton + Windsor-Smith) The strong pace continues as another Solar emerges from the mind of the original. The writers weave the mystery well and Windsor-Smith rounds out the enjoyable package. (JF) 7

<++> This is even better than the excellent first issue. The art is clear, fresh and beautifully coloured. It reads so well - and Dr Solar appears in his traditional costume. We meet some of the supporting cast, this is definately Jim Shooter's best work since his classic Legion stories. (PHB) 8

Glorious art by Barry Windsor-Smith (much better than his recent **Weapon-X/Wolverine** stint for Marvel) thanks to Layton's inking, is the real draw here, 'though Perlin's pages are far better than expected. The plot concerns Solar's various selves and origin 'though it's too early to tell quite what's going on. (AW) 7

Terminator: Secondary Objectives 1 (of 4; Dark Horse; Robinson & Gulacy) Turns out there's still a loose Termie out

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there, wreaking enough death and destruction to satisfy even the most extreme violence addict, so Terminator fans won't be disappointed. Gulacy's art is always a treat, and colourist Greg Wright gives the comic a suitably bold and bright look. (SM) 9

Terminator: Secondary Objectives 2 <+ -> (Dark Horse; Robinson & Gulacy) The follow-up to the **Terminator: Tempest** mini-series (now reprinted as a trade paperback) carries on with the good and bad humans and terminates alike heading south for Mexico to find Sarah Connor. A vast improvement on its predecessor, if only for Gulacy's gorgeous art and a less confusing storyline. (AW) 7

Terminator: Tempest (Dark Horse/Titan; Arcudi & Warner) In this trade paperback reprint of the Dark Horse limited series, more terminators and humans flee the future computer-run nightmare world to protect and destroy, respectively, the scientific developments that brought it about. Spiced with gore by the bucketload, the plot rips along but it is let down by the Gibbons-meets-the-Pnader-Bros artwork. For terminal Terminator fans only. (AW) 5

Tim Holt Western Annual 1 (AC; Fox & Bolle) Tim and his alter ego, Red Mask, face the problem of appearing together in a shooting contest: a photographer is threatened by rustlers; a wagon train faces destruction by marauding Sioux; and white men conspire to set the Pawnee on the warpath. Four classic tales from the prolific Gardner Fox starring RKO's western hero, plus loads of movie still and posters. (PCP) 8

Unsupervised Existence 5 <+ -> (Fantagraphics; LaBan) Yet another one of those autobiographical b&w independents, 'though this one turns out to be better than most as LaBan takes us bumming around Europe with him. Anyone who's ever done the same will be able to relate to experiences such as being ripped off, or having to wire the folks back home for more money. LaBan's an engaging enough fellow, and his Jack Davis derived pencils do the job. (SM) 7

Vampire Lestat 11 <+ -> (Innovation; Perozich & Gross) With only one issue of this fine comic still to come, events are moving at a hectic pace. Lestat is seduced by Akasha (one of Those Who Must Be Kept) leaves Marius, falls on hard times and eventually decides to go down into the earth for decades. There are some nice set-ups for other Innovation adaptations of Anne Rice books, with references to 'Ramses the Damned' and the events in 'Interview with the Vampire' as the book moves swiftly towards (what I hope will be) a very satisfying conclusion. (LC) 8

The Young Witches (Eros; Barreiro & Lopez) Poor South American would-be erotica. If this is the kind of dross that they're reading over there, it's no wonder that illiteracy is such a problem. The story is skimpy, dull and contrived, and the art, which is grade B to begin with, gets progressively worse as Lopez vainly tries for an atmospheric Gothic feel - and fails. (SM) 3

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UK INDEPENDENTS

Rupert Bear Annual 1938 (Express Newspapers; Bestall) No mistake, the third ever annual is now available by mail order only direct from the Express as a lavish, top quality reprint. In its original b&w and red on specially milled paper, it features eight classic early stories written and drawn by seminal **Rupert** artist Alfred Bestall. (AW) 8

Rupert Bear Annual 1991 (Express; Henderson & Robinson + Harrold) Annual 56 -if you're counting! The same compentent mixture as in recent years - five stories drawn by current **Rupert** artist John Harrold, full colour, with origami and puzzles. Allowing for the different hands at the helm, it is recognisably Rupert - it ain't Bestall, but it comes a good second bestall (ouch!) (AW) 6

Rupert: A Bear's Life (Pavilion Books; George Perry) The definitive biography - everything you ever wanted to know about the world's longest-running cartoon character, copiously illustrated and with several complete adventures reprinted. If you like the little bear sufficiently, this is the book for you. (AW) 10

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WOLVERINE [1988]: 2 @ £4.95; 5 @ £2.95; 6(mc),7(mc),8(mc) @ £2.25; 9 @ £2.75; 11,15,16,17 @ £1.50; 20-24 @ £1.25; 25-32,34,35,38 @ £1.50
WOLVERINE - THE JUNGLE ADVENTURE [o/s] @ £3.50
WOLVERINE SAGA [m/s]: 1-4 @ £2.75
X-FACTOR: 21(fn) @ 75p; 22(fn-vfn) @ £1.00; 24(vg/rs) @ 50p; 48 @ £1.00; 53 @ £1.25; 54,56,58,59 @ 80p; 63,64 @ £1.75; **Annuals** - 3 @ £2.25; 4-6 @ £1.75
X-FACTOR: PRISONER OF LOVE [o/s] @ £3.75
[UNCANNY] X-MEN: 148 @ £2.75; 154 @ £2.50; 224 (fn-vfn) @ 90p; 225(fn-vfn) @ £1.10; 230 @ £1.25; 239-241 @ £1.50; 242 @ £1.95; 243,244 @ £1.25; 245 @ £3.95; 246,247 @ £1.00; 248 @ £8.95; 249,250-252 @ £1.00; 253-255 @ £1.25; 256(vg/centre pages loose) @ £2.25; 257 @ £6.95; 258(vfn) @ £5.25; 260-266 @ £1.00; 272 @ £3.75; 273 @ £2.75; 274 @ £2.50; 275 @ £2.95; 275(gold edition) @ £1.75; 276,277 @ £1.00; **Annuals** - 7,8 @ £2.50; 9 @ £5.95; 12 @ £2.50; 13 @ £1.75
HEROES FOR HOPE [o/s]: 1 @ £2.75
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An independently viewed look at hits, misses, prices, projects and people in the news as overheard by ITMA

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Mutant Hysteria

MUTANTMANIA is dead ... it has been replaced by mutant *hysteria*. The selling prices of recent X-book back issues have rocketed as old and new fans have been caught up in all the publicity and have flocked to buy all issues, even those that were considered to be of a pretty low standard. **X-Factor, New Mutants** and even the notoriously slow periods of **Uncanny X-Men** are flying out of back issue boxes. "Just like old times," one dealer commented at a recent TUC London Mart.

But can we really expect titles such as **X-Force** and the new **X-Men** to ever be investment items with their ridiculously high print figures? The 7 million print run for the new **X-Men 1** makes *all* issues of **Uncanny X-Men** seem rare items by comparison.

X-Men 2 will probably run to a second edition, and already there is a dramatic reduction in availability of 1st print copies available from the corresponding issue.

Cable Popularity

The Cable card carrying copies of **X-Force 1** are already commanding more than double price from many dealers despite the fact that copies can still be found at cover price in most branches of *Forbidden Planet*. But it's looking like Marvel is grooming its **X-Force** leader as a major player. Expect one of Marvel's big summer '92 releases to be the mutant head in his own title, **Cable**. Rumours are already flourishing in the States, and with the news of a Ghost Rider - Cable crossover team-up in the anthology title **Marvel Comics Presents**, followed by a Punisher cross-over in Autumn, Cable is the man you have to speculate on.

The new X-Factor

Before we leave the Marvel mutants entirely, be on the look out for the old **X-Men 124** by Claremont and Byrne. This issue featured the first appearance of what will be the nucleus of the new **X-Factor** team. And with Peter David now scripting, **X-Factor** will become enormous. Guido is another character destined for star status.

Infinity Gauntlet

Marvel has really let the conclusion of the current **Infinity Gauntlet** storyline out of the bag. Both **Silver Surfer** and **Hulk** have storyline events in their **Gauntlet** crossover issues transpiring *after* the mini-series' conclusion, which has yet to be seen. Reminiscent of Marvel's old crossover continuity problems, the company seems unable to bring its tie-in titles out in the right order, unlike DC's intelligently marketed crossover epic **Armageddon 2001**, which continues to increase in back issue value.

Infinity Gauntlet has already lost a major selling gimmick with the loss of artist George Perez. Fans are starting to feel cheated over the anticlimax. All this after Perez had been boasting in print that he'd already completed the artwork, yet now we learn he's pulled out.

Thanos Rules OK

But something solid has come out of **Infinity Gauntlet**. Jim Starlin's answer to Kirby's Darkseid has finally become a major villain. If ever a character has grown in popularity, this son of the planet Titan has smashed records. **Iron Man 40**, in which Starlin featured the character, is now a £40 to £60 comic, far surpassing Sabretooth as the recent bankable Marvel villain. Thanos-featuring issues of **Captain Marvel, Avengers, Marvel Feature, Two-in-One, Iron Man** and (in particular) **Warlock** are leaping in price, but probably the most sought-after item is the Thanos/Destroyer story in the back of Marvel's **Logan's Run** tv spin-off. This previous dust gatherer is suddenly fetching prices of £5 upwards.

Declining Comics

The DC Comics ideas team seems to be suffering from a distinct lack of enthusiasm, as their list of new titles and host of mini-series attests. **War of the Gods** is a steady seller, but it hardly competes with their last mega-mix **Armageddon 2001**. About which, the latest tie-ins continue to go into second editions, with only the **Justice League** annual gathering dust on shelves -- adding fuel to the rumours of the title's declining sales.

Recent mini-series such as **Outlaws** and **Justice Society**, together with the less than Impact line of titles are causing nervous reaction from retailers attempting to predict future sales with their advance orders. That DC, who prove themselves to be a far bigger risk taker than Marvel, is in such a

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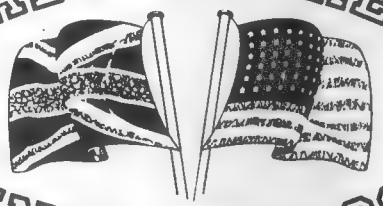

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decline seems truly unjustified.

On the Racks

While DC's new line-up is proving to be an investor's nightmare, UK newsstand distrib GBD is certainly looking after the profit-minded UK collector. The latest from the company which brings over DC's titles rivals the recent Marvel goldmines from rival distrib Comag. Fans snapped up copies of **New Mutants 100, X-Men 250** and **Surfer 50** at 60p, and are now gleefully finding the first edition DC annuals in their corner shops at the ridiculously low 50p price.

Superman Annual 3 is in the shops at time of writing, with other **Armageddon** tie-in giants to follow.

Peripherals abound

Could it be that the day of the trade paperback is over? Print runs on the classic and non-classic collections continue to slide as new launches go into the millions. Even those who moved into trade paperbacks as coffee table accessories are now seeking out the musty old originals, enchanted with their rising values as much as their content.

This market has been boosted by the growing industry of "comic care" accessories, pioneered in Britain by such stalwarts as Justin Ebbs. It now seems that plastics and cardboard manufacturers are showing a considerable demand through orders placed by comics retailers and collectors.

A Robert Horne (paper manufacturers) rep told me recently that there had been a distinct increase in orders for Gemini card, which is the material commonly used for comics backing boards.

The Uncollectables

There has been a noted increase in concern among traders at comic marts about uncollectable comics. While both UK and US guides place spurious values on worthless old titles, no trader wants to buy them at any discount.

Northern comics dealers *Key Comics* phoned a few days ago looking for guidance. They'd been offered virtually every single Marvel comic since 1960, with only two comics missing from a full publishing run. But while this rare find included first issues of **Fantastic Four, Hulk, X-Men, Avengers** and such like, it also had sets of **Millie the Model, Kid Colt, Captain Savage, Where Monsters Dwell** and every other turkey Marvel has published over the last thirty years. Full near mint sets, with absolutely nominal value.

Key Comics had the quandary of how much to pay when the fan wouldn't split the collection up. The problem lies in the harsh reality that almost 75% of Marvel's titles are worth little more than their original cover price. For Guides to say that an average Marvel back issue is worth at least 60p, today's newsstand price, is ludicrous. If a turkey cost 10p when it was published twenty years ago and never acquired a fan following, it hasn't increased in value. In truth, it's a second hand comic. If a dealer has to pay a fair percentage of current guide value to buy **Ewoks** (60p), **For Your Eyes Only** (£1), **Godzilla** (75p), **Indiana Jones** (60p) or **Mighty Marvel Western** (£1.75) and hundreds more, he's sure to raise his prices on the good stuff just to cover his losses on the rubbish.

Anyone looked at the way stamp guides handle things?

Silver Gold Mine

Watch out for price increases on **The Incredible Hulk**. Not only the excellent new Peter David issues, but also the original (failed) 1962-1963 six-issue run. Almost all the major silver age specialists are reporting increases in demand for high grade copies. Expect issues 1, 5 and 6 to be the real hot **Hulk** books.

Oldies Revival

In the wake of DC making a last-minute decision to launch their **Green Arrow/Butcher** six-issue team-up under a revived **The Brave & The Bold** title heading, Marvel is reported to be toying with some of their old generic titles. One proposal is for a revived **Strange Tales** featuring Johnny Blaze as a Hellblazer-style demonic troubleshooter. So it might be worth hanging on to your old Johnny Blaze/Ghost Rider series a bit longer. Nothing like a revival to inflate values for dead books.

Living Dead Books

With no apologies for the terrible link, Marvel's '70s splurge of horror titles, **Frankenstein, Living Mummy, Werewolf by Night, Tomb of Dracula, Fear** et al, are making a mini-comeback as collectable titles thanks to Marvel's latest push into the horror market. If the company's "Harvest of Evil" line is a success, it might just work.

UKCAC Bargain Time

Those of you reading this before or during the annual comics convention should play a waiting game if after bargains. While you risk missing out on Saturday sales, if things are quiet, the real bargains will be found on Sunday pm. Catch the dealers after the bar closes, when they're looking at all the boxloads they'll have to carry away. You'll be surprised at the discounts offered.

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2 £3.50
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5, 6 @ £1.25
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2 £4.00
3 £7.50
4 - 6 @ £3.00
7, 8 @ £2.00
9 £3.50
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3 £2.00
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418 £5.50
419 £3.75
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Set 1 - 4 £32.50
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301 £8.00
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306 - 315 @ £6.00
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One-shot £5.00
1 £5.00
2 £4.00
3, 4 @ £3.00
Ghost Rider (2nd)
1 £9.50
2 £7.00
3, 4 @ £5.00
5 £7.00
6 £5.00
Incredible Hulk
330 £12.50
331 £7.50
338, 339 @ £5.50
340 £12.00
Marvel Comics Presents
1 £2.75
2 - 5 @ £2.00
New Mutants
87 £14.00
88 £7.50
Marvel Fanfare
1 £3.50
2 £3.75
3 £2.75
4 £3.75
Nick Fury v SHIELD
1 £5.50
2 £4.00
3 £3.00
4-6 @ £2.50
Set 1 - 6 £17.50
Punisher (v2)
1 £12.50
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6 - 8 @ £4.50
9 £5.75
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4, 5 @ £3.00
6 £8.00
7 £4.50
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1 £5.50
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3, 4 @ £2.00
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2 £4.00
3, 4 @ £3.00
Set 1 - 4 £12.50
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3 £2.25
4, 5 @ £2.00
6, 8, 9 @ £1.50
7 £1.75
10 £4.00
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X-Men
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3 £5.00
4 £3.50

... all of the above are unopened nm-m unread titles stored since publication. Postage: 35p 1st comic, 9p thereafter.

Now, into the time machine and back to the pulp years -- we have probably the best selection of **Weird Tales** currently available in the country.

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1936/Feb 15	vg	£40
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1941/Jan 15	vg	£25
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1945/4 6 10 12	f	£20
1946/4 7 8	f	£20
The Avenger		
1939/10	g	£15
1940/0	vg/f	£20
The Lone Eagle		
1936/5	vg	£12
1938/12	vg	£12
1940/4	g	£10
Weird Tales		
1928/11	f	£75
1935/6	vf	£45
1936/8	vg/f	£45
1937/3	vg/f	£40
1937/8	vg	£35
1938/7	vg/f	£35
1938/8 11	nr f	£40
1940/3	f	£20
Lariat (great Fiction Hse good girl artwork)		
1941/3 11	f	£6
1943/1 5	f	£6
1950/fall	f	£5

Please send want lists; we have over 250,000 (count'em!) items in stock - other than Marvel and DC thousands of books from the '40s and '50s publishers: Carl Barks' Donald Duck (WDCS); Walt Kelly's Pogo Possum; Dick Briefer's Frankenstein; '50s horror: Witches Tales; Tomb of Terror; Black Cat; '50s crime: Underworld Crime; Down with Crime; '40s & '50s funny animal/humour comics; PEP, Archie, Sad Sack; '40s & '50s western titles; etc., etc., etc.

LETTERS

COMICS INTERNATIONAL's letters column is your forum for opinion on publications, writers, artists, prices, market trends and anything else connected with the industry. As such, opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the publisher. Letters intended for publication will only be edited as a grammatical or space consideration. Write to us at:

Comics International Letters, PO Box 1937, London N3 2LP

Suddenly, the UK comics market has taken a quantum leap forward to become a major industry and a legitimate part of the entertainment/communication media. While there are still those who hold on tightly to the belief that the comics industry is a fan's genre, you have only to look through this issue to see that it is a unique medium, and one of very few to be growing so rapidly in 1991.

*... **Derek G. Skinn/Editor***

P. R. Stevenson, Moore Harness, Thurmaston, Leicester

Thanks for continuing to send me **Comics International**. Even as a non comics buff I find the publication excellent and often pick up more information than from the actual comics publishers.

I particularly appreciate the reviews and the disparity between the reviewing panel where the same title can get a 9 or a 1. No wonder I can't predict sales.

I haven't noticed a 0 yet, so obviously there is a humane side to you somewhere.

I hope your circulation continues to grow.

For as long as I can remember, Peter Stevenson has been an unsung hero of the comics industry. One of the key figures responsible for getting comics out of America and into your local newsagent, his company has been importing US titles since 1959, and publishing British editions when the American originals weren't allowed over here in the 1950s. Thanks to Moore Harness (then known as Thorpe & Porter) hardly a single DC, Charlton, Archie, Dell or Marvel failed to appear on UK newsstands throughout the 1960s. In the competitive '90s the company only imports the DC range, but still manages to offer every non-licenced title to the discerning newsagent.

A J Palmer, 97 Packenham Rd
Basingstoke, Hants

I'd like to thank you for producing **Comics International**. I support Ray Hopkins's comments in issue 12, it's great value. Especially the comprehensive advance listings section which more than makes up for the lack of detail on certain import comic vendors' advance order lists!

I'd even go so far as to say that **C/I** is reminiscent of those heady days of your old **Fantasy Advertiser**, especially around the transition from A5 to A4 size (issue 50, with the Frank Bellamy interview?) Was that really nigh on 20 years ago?

Perhaps things are a bit more mercenary nowadays, but something must keep people interested in the "good ol' funnybooks" all this time.

Keep up the good work in turning out the best value in the comics industry.

Yes, it was 20 years ago, but I started young. It seems strange that back then everyone complained because not enough comics were being aimed at a 'mature' audience. Now, people are complaining about the volume which is aimed at that same audience. A sign of the times, perhaps.

Jim Baikie, somewhere off the Scottish mainland

Thanks for the **Comics International 12**. It blew away most of a morning, but was well worth it.

Sitting out here on the edge of the known universe I need a news-zine to keep me up to date, and you're filling the bill nicely.

On the work front "Skizz II" is just about done, and starts a nine week run in **2000AD** in late Autumn. After that I start a contract with DC Comics; **Black Mask** with writer Brian Augustyn, in three prestige format fully painted books for editor Archie Goodwin.

Best wishes in the future with **Comics International**.

We seem to be falling into the tradition of all good chat shows. A creative star says a few nice things then gets in a quick plug for the latest project. Nice one, Jim.

Aaron Tilson, 22 Hillhouse Rd, Stone, Nr Dartford, Kent

I must say I look forward to the new **Comics International** each month as much as I do some of my favourite comics. It's full of news and reviews as well as interesting information. But the best section must be the Movers & Shakers column. Please, whatever you do, don't change this section.

But enough praise, I'm sure you get letters full of it all the time.

A few questions: Can you increase the size of your letters page? It's interesting hearing other fans views and questions. Also, can you run a series of reviews -- not of comics, but of the shops which sell them. You could find out the best shops for both service and fair prices, and it would make some retailers sort themselves out.

Letters: We also find readers views interesting and yes, we do get lots of flattering post. But the two are not the same. While longer opinions are published in our Comment column, we welcome reader reaction. Despite selling over 10,000 a month and receiving a great deal of post, we get very few interesting comments for publication.

*Shop guide: something we did consider. But given their scattered locations and different catchment areas, few shops outside of London are actually in competition. Short of printing a blatent publicity piece, we're not here to judge others, so a **Which Comic Shop?** guide is something we'd rather leave to others.*

DAREDEVIL 1 vg- @ £275; 2 vg (small hole) @ £115; 5 vg+ @ £38; 6 vg- @ £25; 8 fn @ £30; 9 vg+ (chips) @ £19; 10 vg+ very small chip @ £19; 11 fn @ £19; 12 vg @ £17; 13 vg @ £16; 14 fn- @ £17; 15 vg+ @ £17; 16 vg+ (Spider-man) @ £13

... also 75% of the rest of Daredevil set.

FANTASTIC FOUR 1 vfn @ £2950; 2 g+ @ £350; 4 g @ £100; 6 vg- @ £90; 7 vg- @ £80; 8 vg+ (small chip) @ £100; 9 vg (chip) @ £95; 10 vg+ (small chips) @ £90; 11 vg @ £70; 12 vg- @ £65; 14 vg @ £45; 15 vg+ (small hole) @ £50; 16 vg (book stamp) @ £45; 17 vg- @ £45; 18 vg+ @ £50; 19 vg (2 book stamps) @ £45; 20 fn- @ £50.

... also 90% of rest of Fantastic Four set.

BATMAN 82 g (1954) @ £90; 93 g+ (1955) @ £55; 103 vg- (1956, small chip) @ £55; 122 vg- (1959) @ £38; 124 vg (1959) @ £35; 125 (1959) vg- @ £38; 126 vg+ (chips, 1959) @ £50; 127 fn- (Joker; 1959) @ £50; 128 vg (1959) @ £38; 129 vg @ £40; 130 vg @ £40; 131 vg- @ £28; 132 vg @ £27; 133 vg @ £27; 134 vg+ @ £27; 136 vg (Joker) @ £40; 137 vg+ (with split) @ £27; 171 vg- £90; 200 vg @ £90.

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EVENTS GUIDE

As an at-a-glance guide for readers, this listing gives the dates and locations of all forthcoming events advertised elsewhere this issue. A free service for advertisers, the bracketed number at the end of each entry denotes the advertising page this issue where further details appear.

SEPTEMBER

14/9 **CROYDON**: Deadline Magazine group signing at Enigma, Unit 6, 22-30 Keeley Rd, Croydon, Surrey. (p 43)

14/9 **NEWCASTLE:** Comic Mart & Film Fair, Blackfriars Hall, New Bridge Street, Newcastle (p 20)

14/9 **LONDON:** Comic Fair, Central Hall, Parker Street, Westminster, London. (p 73)

21/9 **SHEFFIELD:** Comic Mart & Film Fair, Main Hall, Sheffield Polytechnic, Howard Street (p 20)

28/9 **LEEDS:** Comic Mart, Leeds Polytechnic, Brunswick Building, Merrion Way, Leeds. (p 15)

28-9/9 **LONDON:** Stateside at Virgin. Grand opening with guests inc Dredd, Gibbons and Spider-Man. 527 Oxford St. (p 52)

OCTOBER

5/10 **LONDON:** Comic Mart, T.U.C. Congress Centre, 23-28 Great Russell Street, London WC1 (p 48)

13/10 **LIVERPOOL:** Comic Mart & Film Fair, Crest Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool (p 40)

19/10 **LONDON:** Comic Fair, Central Hall, Parker Street, Westminster, London. (p 73)

19/10 **MANCHESTER**: Comic Mart with guest Jamie Delano, Piccadilly Plaza Exhibition Hall, York Street (p 61)

19/10 **MANCHESTER:** Comic Mart, Parkers Hotel, Corporation Street, Manchester (p 50)

26/10 **LEEDS:** Comic Mart, Leeds Polytechnic, Brunswick Building, Merrion Way, Leeds. (p 15)

NOVEMBER

2/11 **LIVERPOOL:** Comic Mart with guest Bryan Talbot, Bluecoat Chambers Concert Hall, School Lane (p 40)

2/11 **NOTTINGHAM;** Comic Mart, The Broadway, Broad Street, Nottingham (p 20)

3/11 **LONDON:** Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, London WC1 (p 17)

9/11 **SHEFFIELD:** Comic Mart & Film Fair, Main Hall, Sheffield Polytechnic, Howard Street (p 20)

10/11 **LIVERPOOL:** Comic Mart & Film Fair, Crest Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool (p 40)

16/11 **NEWCASTLE:** Comic Mart, Blackfriars Hall, New Bridge Street, Newcastle (p 20)

23/11 **LEEDS:** Comic Mart, Leeds Polytechnic, Brunswick Building, Merrion Way, Leeds. (p 15)

24/11 **LONDON:** Comicbook Marketplace Special Edition, Royal Horticultural Society Old Hall, Vincent Sq, SW1 (p 59)

30/11 **LONDON:** Comic Fair, Central Hall, Parker Street, Westminster, London. (p 73)

30/11 **MANCHESTER:** Comic Mart, Parkers Hotel, Corporation Street, Manchester (p 50)

DECEMBER

7/12 **LONDON:** Comic Mart, T.U.C. Congress Centre, 23-28 Great Russell Street, London WC1 (p 48)

14/12 **NOTTINGHAM:** Comic Mart, The Broadway, Broad Street, Nottingham (p 20)

JANUARY

5/1 **LONDON:** Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, London WC1 (p 17)

18/1 **LONDON:** Comic Fair, Central Hall, Parker Street, Westminster, London. (p 73)

25/1 **LEEDS:** Comic Mart, Leeds Polytechnic, Brunswick Building, Merrion Way, Leeds (p 15)

FEBRUARY

1/2 **LONDON:** Comic Mart, T.U.C. Congress Centre, 23-28 Great Russell Street, London WC1 (p 48)

29/2 **LEEDS:** Comic Mart, Leeds Polytechnic, Brunswick Building, Merrion Way, Leeds (p 15)

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